

THE TIMES

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TOMORROW IN
THE SATURDAY TIMES
Sex and drugs
and sticky-back
plastic

How the BBC covers the war media times pages 42-45 FREE BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS token page 28

30p

EVERY
WEEKDAY

US outrage at PoW show trial

America will stand by her own

BY MICHAEL EVANS,
TOM WALKER AND
IAN BRODIE

THREE bruised and battered American soldiers, snatched by Yugoslav troops across the border from Kosovo, are to appear at a show trial in Belgrade today.

The sight of the three men on Yugoslav state television looking shocked and haggard caused outrage across the United States and President Clinton said that President Milosevic would be held personally responsible for their safety.

He said: "There was absolutely no basis for them to be taken and there is no basis for them to be held. There is certainly no basis for them to be tried. President Milosevic should make no mistake, the United States takes care of its own. We will hold him and his government responsible for their safety and well-being."

The three were named as Staff Sergeant Andrew Ramirez, 24, from Los Angeles, Staff Sergeant James Stone, 25, from Michigan, and Specialist Steven Gonsalves, 24, from Texas. All are cavalry scouts serving with the 4th Infantry Division based in Schweinfurt, Germany.

They were grabbed in their Humvee vehicle as they were carrying out a routine reconnaissance mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. They were described as operating for the United Nations, but the UN put out a statement last night pointing out that its mandate in Macedonia had expired. Nevertheless, Nato insisted that the men were well inside Macedonia, while Belgrade claimed that they had strayed into Kosovo.

The capture — the second propaganda coup in a week for the Yugoslavs after the downing of an American Stealth fighter — caused celebrations in Belgrade. And there was another setback for Nato yesterday when Ibrahim Rugova, the moderate leader of the ethnic Albanians, was seen on Yugoslav state television in a meeting with Mr Milosevic in Belgrade.

There had been fears for his life when he disappeared last week, but he emerged yesterday saying that he was under the protection of Serb forces.



Jason Pike and Steven Gonsalves, right, photographed by *Stars and Stripes* at their observation post near the Yugoslav border and, inset, Gonsalves as he appeared on Yugoslav television yesterday with Andrew Ramirez, left, and James Stone, centre

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thankful that the servicemen are alive, but clearly the signs that they have been mistreated are very disturbing."

An official protest was delivered to the Swedish Government which represents American interests in Belgrade and the Yugoslav authorities were warned to treat the three soldiers in accordance with the Geneva Convention, even though neither side has formally declared war.

Under the convention, prisoners are supposed to be fed, unharmed, taken care of and not exploited for propaganda purposes. Washington has asked that a neutral party be allowed to see the three men. The soldiers had reported in

a radio message from their Humvee vehicle that they were surrounded and in a small arms fight. Whether they later escaped and drove in the wrong direction or escaped on foot was unclear.

General Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said: "A manhunt was launched, but the next thing American officials knew was the three men's television appearance.

If convicted of spying at the court martial, the three could face up to 20 years in jail, according to new provisions set up under the state of emergency in Yugoslavia. However, in an extraordinary interview on BBC World Service last night,

the Serb paramilitary leader Arkan gave his word that they would come to no harm.

He said: "They are brave soldiers, they have been fighting, they didn't want to surrender and I said thanks be to God that they are alive." Arkan, an indicted war criminal, went on to say that they had "put up a fight", adding: "The Yugoslav Army is keeping them and they'll be treated under the Geneva Convention. They will be well treated, don't you worry."

General Nebojsa Pavkovic, the commander of the Yugoslav unit that grabbed the soldiers, assured those involved that they "would become legends in the history of Serbia".

Nato meanwhile announced

that it would continue stepping up the air campaign against Yugoslavia, and the first indication of the new expanded targeting strategy became apparent when a bridge over the Danube at Novi Sad was destroyed, blocking all traffic on one of Europe's busiest waterways.

Despite Nato claims yesterday that eight days of bombing had caused substantial damage to Yugoslavia's military infrastructure, the supreme commander General Wesley Clark confirmed that discussions were under way about a possible limited ground troops operation to set up a sanctuary for civilians in Kosovo.

Unseasonal sun, seasonal jams

BY STEPHEN FARRELL AND ADAM SHERWIN

SUN worshippers fleeing the cities for Easter yesterday encountered huge traffic congestion on many major routes in unseasonably high temperatures of 21C, with the M5 at a standstill and ten-mile tailbacks on the A30 near Exeter.

Tailbacks stretched for 18 miles on the M4 after a lorry overturned near Reading.

The former British Rail ticket collector broke down and wept as the jury announced its first verdict, that almost 60 years ago he had murdered two Jewish men and a woman and pushed their bodies into an open grave. Four hours later, they returned and by a majority of 10-1 said he had also been guilty of ordering 15 Jewish women to strip and face an open grave before killing them with a sub-machine gun.

He claimed that he had been a friend of the Jews. In the court's public restaurant, he was overheard expressing his hatred of them. The defence is considering an appeal. The jurors are to be excused jury service for their lives.

After being told of this, the judge granted him bail until the verdicts yesterday when he was returned to Belmarsh. On his last day of freedom, an angry Sawoniuks threw stones at photographers waiting for him to leave for court.

His war crimes took place in Domachevo, Belarus, when he became one of the first to join the local police force established by the Nazis after they overran the town in 1941. The judge ordered Sawoniuks, who

were given two life sentences at the Old Bailey yesterday after becoming the only person to be convicted in a British court of Nazi war crimes.

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SAWONIUK VERDICT

Spelling error nearly led to killer's escape

By TIM JONES

A SIMPLE error in transliteration almost ensured that Anthony Sawoniuk was never called to account for his crimes.

Because of the misspelling, after an intensive year-long hunt the trail grew cold and the War Crimes Unit established by Scotland Yard became convinced that he was not living in Britain. In April 1992, they wrote to the Home Office to say they were taking him off their list of 376 war crime suspects.

But then, after being briefed by a historian about Russian spelling, they revisited the National Immigration Centre and saw that he had entered Britain in 1946.

Armed with the fresh lead, the historian Alastair MacLeod, one of two experts on the Nazi Holocaust who had been drafted onto the team, visited Brest in Belarus, where he discovered KGB records that revealed Sawoniuk's blood-stained past.

Unbeknown to Sawoniuk, who was leading an unremarkable life in London, the damning file had been started by a KGB "extraordinary commissions" unit that visited Domachevo in 1944, after the Nazis had been driven out, to ask questions about who had been fighting for the Germans.

In 1951, five years after he en-

THE HUNT

tered Britain as a member of the Polish Free Army, Sawoniuk had made the fatal mistake of writing to his half-brother, Nikolai, who still lives in Poland, to tell him of his new life beyond the Iron Curtain.

The letter, which was routinely opened by the KGB, established that Sawoniuk was living with his third wife, Christina van Ghent, on the South Coast of England. The KGB took no action but they never forgot.

More than 30 years later, in the early 1980s, the KGB were able to update their files on him when they intercepted another letter. This had been sent by a man named Stephan Androsuk, who died more than three years ago in a car crash.

Writing from London to his sister who still lives near Brest, he mentioned that he was ac-

quainted with Sawoniuk.

As Sawoniuk neared retirement in 1986, he probably thought he would never be called to account for the mass murders he committed. But he was about to become unwittingly caught up in the political turmoil sweeping the Soviet Union.

Mikhail Gorbachev was introducing glasnost and perestroika, and Margaret

Thatcher, then Prime Minister, declared he was a man with whom she could do business.

In the glow of the new relationship, the Soviet Embassy in 1988 provided the British Government with a list of more than 100 suspected war criminals, one of whom was Sawoniuk.

Even then, Sawoniuk was safe, for there was no mechanism to bring him to justice. That changed in 1991 when, in the face of opposition from the House of Lords, the War Crimes Act of 1991 was introduced and a War Crimes Unit set up by Scotland Yard. Armed with the list, the team began to track down Sawoniuk.

The KGB had told them the man they needed to hunt was Andrei Andreyevich Savanyuk. The way they transliterated his surname, particularly the use of the letter "v" instead of the letter "w", almost ensured his escape.

Using computers, the Scotland Yard team entered the letters "Sav" into the files of more than 15 government agencies from the Inland Revenue to the Department of Social Security.

They drew a blank.

Believing they had exhausted every avenue, the team informed the Home Office that Sawoniuk did not exist. Again, it seemed that fate had conspired to save Sawoniuk, and his luck was running out.

The Yard, told of the possi-

bility different spellings of the name, looked again at the im-

migration files and Mr MacLeod, a fluent Russian speaker who works for the United Nations War Crimes Commission, flew to Brest. There, searching through dust-covered sacks and boxes, he uncovered the file that was to send Sawoniuk to prison.

In March 1996, Sawoniuk's

life of lies and denial began to crumble when, 54 years after his crimes, he answered a knock on his door. Detectives were waiting to interview him.

Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, page 24



The memorial marking the mass grave where the Jews of Domachevo were murdered during the Nazi occupation of the town, now in Belarus

The only trial out of 393 suspects

Tim Jones looks at the results of eight-year manhunt that changed British justice and cost £11million

ANTHONY SAWONIUK was

the first and probably will be the only war crimes defendant to face a British murder trial. His trial also made legal history when the jury became the first to be taken abroad to view the scene of a crime.

Now one man remains un-

der inquiry out of 393 suspects investigated by British police.

A decision has not been made

on his future but it is expected

that he will not face trial for

the alleged murder of a Jew in

Ukraine. After an eight-year

manhunt costing more than £11million, Britain's efforts to

track the Nazi killers of the

last war is now certain to be

closed down.

Two junior officers remain

at Scotland Yard from a team

that once numbered 18, includ-

ing detectives and war historians. All the officers were sea-

soned investigators, accus-

ted to dealing with the Lon-

don underworld, but many

were appalled and moved by

the stories they heard from the

survivors of the Holocaust.

One detective chief inspector

visited Auschwitz in mid-win-

ter and later recalled how he

suddenly realised how terrible

conditions must have been.

Former Detective Superin-

tendent Eddie Baghate, who

headed the investigation when

it was launched, said from the

very beginning that the big-

gest problem was time. The

crimes took place so long ago

that police had to prove not

only that a suspect was the

man they were looking for but

also that he was the war crimi-

nal that the Holocaust survi-

vors believed him to be.

The possibility of a war

crimes unit was raised 13 years

ago when the Simon Wies-

enthal Centre, established to find

Nazis who had escaped jus-

tice, sent the Prime Minister,

Margaret Thatcher, the names

of fugitives who were

said to be living in Britain.

Mr Thatcher launched a

war crimes inquiry, headed in

England by Sir Thomas Hether-

ington, former Director of

Public Prosecutions, and in

Scotland by William Chalm-

ers, the Crown Agent. After ex-

amining 301 allegations, they

decided that there was a "real-

istic prospect" of convictions

and the Government brought

in the statute book.

Nineteen days after the law

was passed, the Yard opened

its unit. Officers received infor-

mation from a wealth of sources

including the former Soviet

Union and war crimes units in

the United States, Canada and

Australia.

In all, 376 cases were identi-

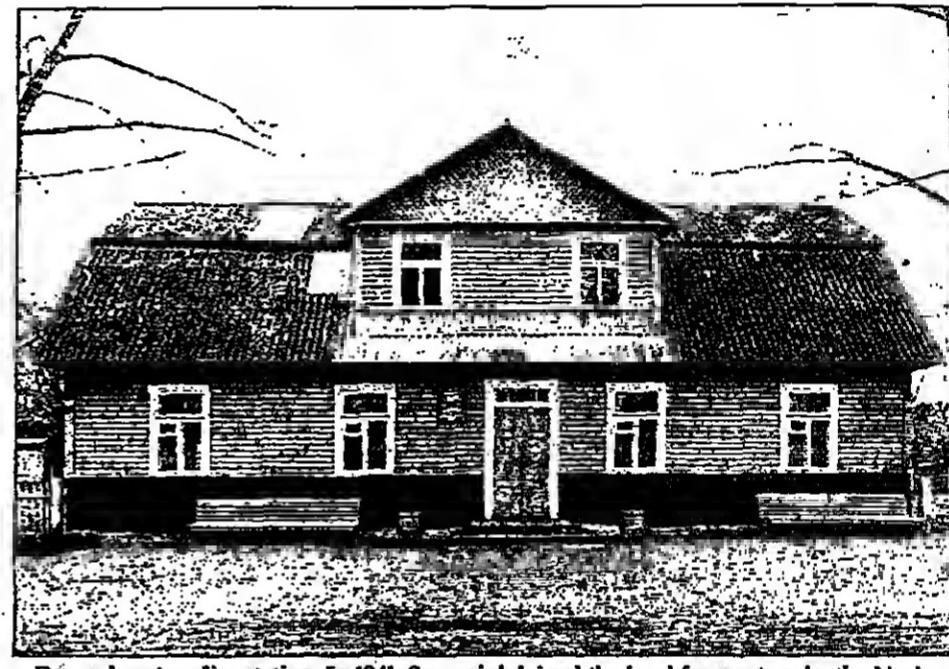
fied by the Yard and another

17 were investigated by Scotti-

sh officers. The investigators

found themselves wading

through records of scores of



Domachevo's police station. In 1941, Sawoniuk joined the local force set up by the Nazis

thousands of people who came to and left Britain after the war. Officers visited 20 countries at a cost of £6.5 million.

The detectives discovered that 117 of the men involved were dead and in 257 cases inquiries have been dropped, either through insufficient evidence or because the suspects were too ill to be interviewed and prosecuted.

The only other prosecution came in April 1996, when Szymon Seradynowicz was committed for trial from Dorking Magistrates' Court to the Central Criminal Court to answer allegations that he had murdered Jewish civilians in Belarus. In January the following year, a jury found him unfit to stand trial and the Attorney-General entered a permanent stay on the prosecution be-

cause of his failing mental health. He has since died.

Moves to prosecute war criminals in Scotland ended after the Lord Advocate ruled against prosecutions even though a man named in the Wiesenthal list had lost a libel trial against Scottish Television.

Antanas Geicas, a retired mining engineer from Edinburgh, was accused of having been the head of a murder squad involved in annihilating thousands of Jews in Lithuania and Belarus.

The judge in the libel trial said that he was satisfied Geicas was involved in the murder of elderly men, women and children. The Crown abandoned its criminal case in 1994 and inquiries involving another 16 Scottish suspects were also dropped.

The possibility of a retrospec-

tion

time does not lessen the guilt'

JEWISH groups greeted the conviction of Aniony Sawoniuk with satisfaction that "justice has been done".

The Jewish rights campaigner Lord Janner of Braunstone, QC, said: "This evil man was accorded a fair trial, which is more than he gave his victims. The Nazis did not try their victims, they murdered them as an unfortunate necessity".

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, its director, said: "It is not pleasant to have to take an elderly man to court, but it is even less pleasant to think of the murders of which he is accused going unpunished."

Lord Janner, a founder member of the All-Party War Crimes Group, added: "I am sorry that so many war criminals who sadly found refuge in Britain have so far escaped justice. This trial and the jury's just verdict has vindicated our war crimes procedure."

"This trial is a symbolic beacon relighting memories of the hideous barbarities of the past. It reminded us all of the dangers that flow from allowing racist dictators to rule, and there could be no better time for that reminder than now."

He described the War Crimes Act, under which Sawoniuk was prosecuted, as "legislation of justice rather than vengeance".

"At a time when war crimes are being committed in Kosovo and elsewhere, this prosecution in Britain will give a powerful message to President Milosevic that

REACTION

people have to face the consequences of their actions, now or later, for the way in which they made others suffer."

"Conversely, lack of prosecution would have undermined the credibility of the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague and implied that those involved in war crimes today might go unpunished in the future."

Neville Nagler, Director-General of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said: "Justice has finally been secured for the Jewish inhabitants of Domachevo murdered by Sawoniuk and the Nazis. His trial and conviction have finally justified the cost and effort involved in bringing war criminals to justice."

The Crown Prosecution Service said: "This has been a remarkable trial in many ways. Its successful conclusion is the result of close co-operation between the CPS and Metropolitan Police and is also a tribute to the courage and resilience of the witnesses."

Continued from page 1

the ten ministerial posts should be shared out, but no power devolved to the new executive pending a "collective act of reconciliation" that would take place within one month.

That act would involve the paramilitaries putting some arms "beyond use on a voluntary basis", further moves by the government towards demilitarisation, and ceremonies of remembrance for all victims of violence. The intention would be to remove any suggestion that the IRA was engaging in an act of surrender, or capitulating to Unionist demands.

The plan says that "around

perils in adjourning the talks, even for a few days. The accord's political opponents will have time to rally against a plan that would clearly involve major compromises by both Mr Trimble and Sinn Fein. Loyalist paramilitary splinter groups bent on wrecking the accord may step up their bombing campaign to make it harder for the IRA to contemplate disarmament.

Mr Blair called the plan "another huge and significant milestone on the road to our destination", and said he was convinced the parties would all back it.

Both Mr Blair and Mr Ahern put the best face on

their failure to meet today's deadline. Mr Blair said the parties were "absolutely wedded" to the accord, and praised their positive, constructive approach. Mr Ahern said he was now certain that "the spirit of democracy contained in the Good Friday accord will win out against all of the negative and destructive forces we have had to deal with over the years".

Ian Paisley, the Democratic Unionist Party leader, denounced the "April Fools Conference" as another fudge whose "act of reconciliation" lent credibility to terrorists.

Adams's task, page 19

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BALKANS WAR: MODERATE OUSTED

Montenegro military chief replaced by Milosevic ally



Rumours of an imminent coup fuel panic in tiny republic, writes Janine di Giovanni in Podgorica

THE tiny Yugoslav republic of Montenegro was dragged a step closer to the war in the Balkans yesterday after its military chief was replaced by a supporter of President Milosevic. The reaction of the people bordered on panic as stories of a coup d'état circulated throughout the capital.

Earlier this week President Djukanovic admitted: "There is a serious and authentic danger that even our state could disappear and burn down in the violence."

Last night, the Government, under great pressure to toe the Belgrade line, called emergency meetings.

"The next four or five days will be critical to Montenegro," said Drasko Djukanovic, editor of *Monitor*, the first independent weekly magazine in Serbia and Montenegro.

The news of President Milosevic replacing the popular General Miroslav Martonovic with General Miroslav Obrazcovic was frightening. "I don't think it's good," Mr Djukanovic said. "It suggests there is a fear of the military. I do think there is danger."

The theory here in the capital is that General Martonovic was replaced because he did not comply with Mr Milosevic's hard line on defending Yugoslavia against Nato attacks. Montenegro has refused to recognise itself as being in a state of war and has maintained a delicate balance between satisfying Mr Milosevic while keeping long-term options to the West open.

Privately, government officials have admitted to journalists that their hope is for Nato to crush Mr Milosevic, but publicly they must condemn the strikes. "It is obvious

we play this game here," one source said. "We have to."

Montenegro is important to Mr Milosevic. The Yugoslav Navy is based in the Bay of Kotor, in addition to an estimated 12,000 Yugoslav troops, 80 per cent of whom come from Serbia.

The police force — most of whom are loyal to the President — number around 10,000 and includes a Special Force division of around 2,400. In addition, most Montenegrins are armed.

Some residents are not waiting to find out how the power struggle will be resolved.

Maja has been crying for three days. She is worried about her mother, who arrived on the last domestic flight here from Belgrade just in time for the first airstrike last week, and who stoically refuses to leave Montenegro, no matter what happens.

"The Government will change," says Zoran Zicic, the Vice President of SNP, the pro-Milosevic party, adding that the change of army commanders was a first step. "But now is not the time. We will be elected democratically, and we will get in, because people here are patriotic."

But others are not so sure. "My worry is that these [pro-Milosevic] demonstrations will move from gatherings in front of the American Cultural Centre and go further into town, which will provoke the police," said Mr Djukanovic.

"But you will know something has happened when you see tanks in front of the presidential building. Then you can join all of us fighting in the Montenegrin Army."

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Shadowy groups linked to killings

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE EDITOR

HIGHLY secret groups from President Milosevic's state security organisation are helping to mastermind the killing of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, according to British defence intelligence officials.

One key figure named yesterday was Franki Simatovic, said to have a long history of "organising, arming and directing" Serb paramilitaries in the Bosnian war, and who was also now active in Kosovo. An intelligence official said: "He is a shadowy individual and we have no picture of him."

As well as looking after the paramilitaries, which now included the notorious Tigers, led by Arkan — the indicted war criminal whose real name is Zeljko Raznatovic — Simatovic also ran a "highly secretive and specialised group" called the JSO. This was a force of about 5,000 men recruited almost exclusively from army special forces.

The official said: "This group is well trained, well motivated and very dangerous. They also act as Milosevic's Praetorian Guard."

The Interior Ministry police had about 5,000 personnel in Kosovo, commanded by Major General Lukic. They had a heavily armed specialised group within them called the PJP.

"They are the police assault troops and are armed and equipped... with mortars, heavy machineguns and armoured personnel carriers," the intelligence official said.

The PJP was the "backbone of Serbia's control in the province and has been responsible for the majority of the atrocities". It was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel General Stevanovic.

Another fearsome organisation was the SAJ, a counter-terrorist team.

Serbs wipe out rebel resistance in two-pronged onslaught

Daniel McGrory in Macedonia and Sam Kiley in Albania predict defeat for the KLA guerrillas

the KLA from the vital Drenica triangle west of Pristina.

The main battle now is reported to be further south, at Malisevo, where KLA units are massed. Serb forces were last night said to be manoeuvring to cut them off from east and west.

A senior source for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe said last night: "There are two wars going on simultaneously inside Kosovo. Milosevic wants to cleanse the ethnic Albanians and will let his paramilitary gangs take care of that. His main aim in the time he has left is to deal with the KLA."

Certainly the bedraggled and demoralised forces reaching northern Albania confirmed reports of a defeat. Exhausted and bloodied in

"He will drive them back to the mountains and then attempt to seal them in there. He knows he can't defeat them in such terrain, but he wants to push them out of the population centres, and in this he appears to be successful."

"The best estimates are that the KLA now has 40,000 men. The majority are no more than village militias, defending their own homes as they swore to do. They are lightly armed and no match for the Serb armour."

"Certainly the bedraggled and demoralised forces reaching northern Albania confirmed reports of a defeat. Exhausted and bloodied in

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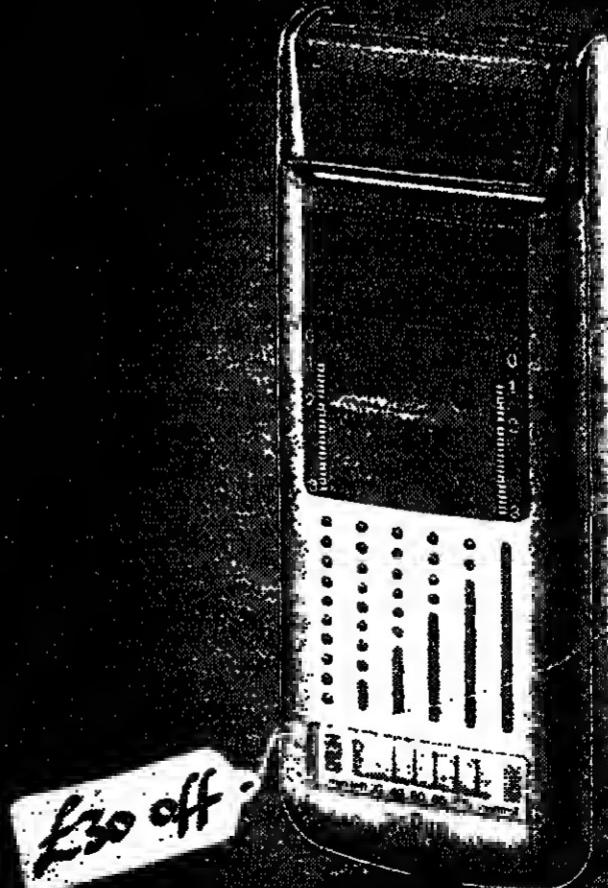
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BALKANS WAR: GROUND ATTACK SCENARIO

Safety zone plan for limited invasion

Charles Bremner in Brussels and Michael Evans, Defence Editor, on Nato's options for going in

With pressure growing for action to halt Serbian massacres, Nato planners are reviewing options for a limited ground operation in Kosovo to secure a safe zone for civilians. General Wesley Clark, the Nato Supreme Commander in Europe, confirmed discussions were under way on a "sanctuary" plan — a scheme that would spare the allies the burden of a full-scale ground war. But he said: "I have heard these discussions. I will not discuss any details or a timeline, or what such a mission might be."

His remarks reinforced the view that a limited zone operation could prove feasible and far faster than the massive deployment of ground forces that would be required for an all-out invasion.

The prospect of Nato troops fighting their way into landlocked Kosovo appears to be looming closer as the Yugoslav armed forces continued their scorched-earth campaign. Western governments continue to treat an all-out ground war as a virtual taboo, given the military conclusion that it would take at least 200,000 troops, plus hundreds of aircraft and tanks, to confront Yugoslav forces in extremely hostile terrain.

A safe areas policy, if it involved forced entry into Kosovo, would still require a large number of troops, military sources emphasised yesterday.

If the Nato plan were to seize a small piece of territory in Kosovo and guard its perimeter with troops, tanks and artillery, modern Western military doctrine would make it imperative for Nato countries to commit at least 100,000 troops for the task — not because they would necessarily need that number for the initial operation, but to sustain it for a long period.

This is why an invasion force to take the Yugoslav Army on in a high-intensity war has been effectively dismissed as unrealistic, because of the numbers of troops that would be needed for a long campaign.

Nato unquestionably has the overwhelming technological advantage over the Yugoslav Army, and with air superiority — or, ideally, air supremacy — Nato would defeat President Milosevic's forces.

However, a war in Yugoslavia would not just be about numbers and technology. Other factors, all in the Yugoslav Army's favour, would be terrain and weather and, above all, national motivation. The pilots in the Battle of Britain defeated the mighty armada of

'A force to take the Yugoslav Army on has been effectively dismissed as unrealistic'

national at a time. Despite all these reasons for rejecting ground troop intervention, Nato is clearly considering a middle option — the safety zones idea.

But if this is to be imposed against the wishes of the Belgrade leadership, a Nato force would have to be considerably larger and more heavily armoured than the proposed 28,000-strong peace implementation force that would have been sent into Kosovo had Belgrade signed the Rambouillet accord.

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FORCES NEEDED

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WHAT THEY ARE UP AGAINST

YUGOSLAV ARMY FORCES
Total active: 114,000
Reserves: 400,000
ARMY
Troops: 90,000
Tanks: 1,270
Artillery: 1,815
AIR FORCE
Combat aircraft: 226
Combat helicopters: 52

KEY NATO WEAPON

A90 155MM SELF-PROPELLED GUN
Range: 18 km. Effective 10 km. Range: 10 km. Accuracy: 95% at 10 km. Range: 80% at 15 km. Range: 60% at 20 km. Range: 40% at 25 km. Range: 20% at 30 km. Range: 10% at 35 km. Range: 5% at 40 km. Range: 2% at 45 km. Range: 1% at 50 km. Range: 0.5% at 55 km. Range: 0.2% at 60 km. Range: 0.1% at 65 km. Range: 0.05% at 70 km. Range: 0.02% at 75 km. Range: 0.01% at 80 km. Range: 0.005% at 85 km. Range: 0.002% at 90 km. Range: 0.001% at 95 km. Range: 0.0005% at 100 km. Range: 0.0002% at 105 km. Range: 0.0001% at 110 km. Range: 0.00005% at 115 km. Range: 0.00002% at 120 km. Range: 0.00001% at 125 km. Range: 0.000005% at 130 km. Range: 0.000002% at 135 km. Range: 0.000001% at 140 km. Range: 0.0000005% at 145 km. Range: 0.0000002% at 150 km. Range: 0.0000001% at 155 km. Range: 0.00000005% at 160 km. Range: 0.00000002% at 165 km. Range: 0.00000001% at 170 km. Range: 0.000000005% at 175 km. Range: 0.000000002% at 180 km. Range: 0.000000001% at 185 km. Range: 0.0000000005% at 190 km. 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BALKANS WAR: EXODUS TO BRITAIN

British lorries used to smuggle refugees

BRITISH lorry drivers are being used by gangs to smuggle Kosovar refugees across the Channel every night.

Many drivers are the unwitting victims of an operation that involves slipping asylum-seekers into the backs of their lorries at Channel ports and European service stations. But some charge money — up to £1,500 — to take groups of refugees to Britain.

A gunfight between rival groups of traffickers left one Kosovar dead and three injured in Calais earlier this week. The shots were fired after two groups of traffickers began disputing a payment received from a refugee who had been put on a lorry bound for Britain, a French investigator said last night.

Olivier Brachet, director of the French Council for Refugees and the Right to Asylum, said: "We know there is a huge business in getting people across Europe and that lorries are the main means of transport. A lot of drivers from all countries are on the take."

A weekly trial of between 250 and 500 Kosovars are attempting to reach Britain from the ferry port of Calais. Others use the Channel Tunnel or other ports. But these numbers are likely to escalate as the impact of the war spreads across Europe.

A French police officer, who

Channel port drivers profit from trade in human cargo from Kosovo,

reports Adam Sage in Calais

said to remain anonymous, said: "We have the Albanian mafia here in Calais. These gangs know which lorry drivers will take the Kosovars. They charge whatever the refugees have ... and the driver gets a cut of that. Many of the drivers involved are British. The traffickers know that Britons are less likely to be stopped at Dover."

On Wednesday in Calais was clear evidence of the refugee trade, with about 40 Kosovars waiting to slip across the Channel. As night fell, three of them huddled in a shadowy corner of the vast lorry park beside the port. In hesitant English, they told of their

desperation to get out of France — which they see as pro-Serb — to reach Britain, "a good country, on our side".

They had left Pristina, south of Pristina, as Nato bombing began and travelled to Vlore in western Albania. There they paid a middleman a total of £5,200 to get them across the Adriatic and find them a European lorry driver to transport them to Calais. "We will be in Britain tomorrow," said one of the three, hinting that he had done a deal with a driver at the port.

French police had spotted the trio, but did not try to stop them. "Unless we see them getting into the lorry we can do

nothing," said an officer. "The powers that be do not want us to clamp down."

A man in a black leather coat walked away as soon as the police car pulled up. "We know he's one of the traffickers," said the officer.

Some of the British drivers waiting to cross the Channel said they knew of colleagues involved in the trade. Bob Hodges, 33, from Manchester, said: "I was offered £1,300 to take a load of Kosovars across last month. I was at a service station in Belgium when a man in a white BMW drove up and said I could have the money in cash. I refused."

Barry Lawton, 51, from Oldham, said he had been the victim of a plot involving Italian police. An officer flagged him down outside Milan. "When I got to Dover, I was stopped by the customs. There were 36 Kosovars in the back."

No arrests: Police in England and Wales have been told not to arrest Kosovar refugees illegally smuggled in by lorries. (Richard Ford and Stephen Farrell write). The aim is to give people claiming to be Kosovo Albanians the "benefit of the doubt" and stop them filling police cells. Any illegal immigrant claiming to be from Kosovo should go to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in Croydon, South London.

PLEAS FOR REFUGEE AID

THE actress Juliet Stevenson and the presenter Jim Dando will make television appeals on behalf of the Kosovo refugees next week, it was announced yesterday (Adrian Lee writes).

The appeals, will be broadcast on BBC 1, BBC 2,

ITV and BSkyB on Tuesday evening. Commercial and BBC radio stations will make appeals on Wednesday, the Disasters Emergency Committee said.

Previous joint appeals, on behalf of 15 leading charities, have raised up to £30 million.



Kosovar activists in London yesterday, including Syle Krasniqi, left, who says that he plans to join the KLA

London provides uneasy haven for young victims of conflict

Joanna Bale, Elizabeth Judge and Stephen Farrell on exiles in UK

MILAH SEJDFU celebrated his 16th birthday alone in the back of a lorry while fleeing Kosovo for Britain. His parents spent all their savings to pay for their eldest son's escape, and had no choice but to stay behind with the rest of their children.

The baby-faced Kosovar, who is living in a bedsit in

east London, has not heard from his family for two months. Terrified that they are among the thousands who have been murdered by the Serbs, he spends his days scouring the newspapers for confirmation they are alive.

"It was too dangerous for me to stay," he said, his expression etched with anxiety. "The Serb police would regularly beat me and my friends, demanding our ID papers. Our schools were closed, our teachers imprisoned. My parents spent all their money sending me here to safety, but now I am very worried that they might be dead."

Milah is just one of hundreds of Kosovar children whose parents sent them to Britain alone as the crisis escalated over the past few months. Most of them are teenage boys, although there are increasing numbers of girls and some children as young as eight.

Those under 16 are sent to foster families by local authorities, while those old enough to look after themselves are condemned to the isolation of bedsits. All are sent to schools where they struggle to keep up with lessons.

Most of them are given vital additional support, including English lessons by Albanian Youth Action, a new charity set up to deal with the crisis.

The project manager, Caroline French Blake, said: "They are all very vulnerable and desperately need support."

We give advice and provide social activities for them so that they can get together and not feel so isolated, but our resources are very limited."

At the charity's headquarters near The Oval in South London yesterday, Mon Kurti, 14, told of his mixed feelings at being in Britain: "I am obviously pleased to be here, but I won't be happy until my family are safe too. I spoke to them a week ago, but have heard nothing since."

Others have similar stories to tell. Resul Sadriu, 16, has not heard from his family for three months after travelling to Britain alone by lorry. All the boys are dominated by fears for their families, but also by their anger at what the Serbs have done.

Arde Kelmendi, 15, is the son of a journalist in Pristina

who lost his job after his newspaper was banned. His father paid for him to be taken by taxi across Europe on a three-day trip to Britain with two other boys. He said: "Nato should have attacked before and sent in ground troops. We just want to return to our homes and live in peace."

The boys are slowly being integrated into an estimated 30,000-strong Kosovar community in north and northwest London, which includes pockets of political activists.

A group of activists meet in a former car-wash in Golders Green. Men in their thirties sit huddled in groups talking in low voices. The walls of the dingy meeting place are decorated with pictures of KLA leaders and a radio broadcasts in their native language.

One of the activists, Syle Krasniqi, 26, said: "I will go as soon as I get the chance. If I get word within the hour, I will go and fight with the KLA."



Mon Kurti, centre, is in the UK but fears for his family

Kate Hunter
Dancer

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BALKANS WAR: JOURNEY INTO EXILE

Refugees herded down track of despair

PETER DEJONG / AP

THEY were forced at gunpoint to walk two by two for miles yesterday along the railway track. About 10,000 refugees picked their way along the narrow rails as the Serbs speeded up their evacuation of Pristina by herding everyone they could find on to trains that ended their journey in a minefield.

Masked Serb gunmen told those families on board they had five minutes to start walking or the carriages would be shunted into a siding and they would be shot.

A blind man tapped his stick on the edge of the rails, clinging to his daughter's arm. She carried her own child on her back. Nobody dared step off the track to help her.

An aid worker turned away, appalled at the sight of this miserable trail that seemed to have no end as it trudged towards the border crossing at Blace yesterday. "We thought such things ended with Hitler's Germany and this is Europe on the verge of the millennium," he said.

Aid organisations cannot cope with the increasing numbers pouring into Macedonia and there were moves last night to enlist the help of the 10,800 Nato troops here to prevent a humanitarian disaster.

After their precarious walk, the railway refugees have to scramble down a steep bank into a field where many of



Kosovars are being driven from a hostile land to an unwelcoming one, writes Daniel McGroarty in Blace

they slept last night without shelter or sanitation.

Arjeta Voglici, 22, staggered among the exhausted bodies asking if anyone had milk she could give her four-month-old daughter who was too weak with hunger to cry.

Three local Red Cross officials stood helplessly on the edge of the field, harangued by refugees who told them it had been 24 hours since they were given anything to eat or drink.

Aid organisations say there is convincing evidence that the Serbs have embarked on an operation to evict all ethnic Albanians from the regional capital of Kosovo.

Lucas Mjaku, 52, a teacher, described how he, his wife and three daughters had been told to leave their home two nights ago and march to Pristina's main railway station. They could barely force their way on to the concourse because of the thousands in front of them.

"We did not know where we were going. We were just shunted into carriages. There was hardly room to breathe. When the train stopped the Serbs showed us the mines

they had laid and told us not to leave the tracks until we were out of our country."

If the Serbs are ensuring it is impossible for the refugees to stay, then neighbouring governments like Macedonia's appear to be making it difficult for them to escape. Police are taking so long to let vehicles cross that by last night there was reported to be a 12-mile queue of cars. Many refugees simply abandoned their cars and walked. When they do get across, refugees are made to queue for hours to register at two makeshift tents on a scrap of wasteland and then pushed onto over crowded buses.

International monitors said 10,000 refugees who had arrived in Albania earlier this week were simply put on buses and tipped over into Macedonia, which refused to take them. They remain in no-man's-land.

The authorities in Skopje said they would take only 20,000 refugees. By last night more than 40,000 had already crossed into Macedonia. Another 30,000 are said to be on the road behind them.

Albanians are indignant that the authorities in Skopje have closed only schools used by their children for use as temporary shelters. One local Albanian leader said: "Everyone in Macedonia must help, not just our community. Where is the UN? The Red Cross and the rest?"

Aid organisations which have been caught unprepared were last night asking Nato to use one of its piloted drone spy planes to pick out where the refugees are heading so they can move tents and food supplies.

Six trains arrived in a matter of hours at Blace yesterday and the authorities there have been told to expect many more today. The Macedonian authorities have not explained why the first train was turned back at the rail border. Only two Macedonian families were allowed off.

At the trackside in Volkovo, local villagers in this stronghold of Serb nationalism jeered at the refugees. One man shouted: "I will burn them all on that train. They are terrorists and we don't want them in Macedonia."

The result is the line of vehicles and refugees (those bussed out are dumped five miles short of the border and forced to walk)

"I am so ashamed of myself... I somehow perhaps thought I was above anyone else, that it could not happen to me. Now I am alone, penniless," John said.

Middle classes join the exodus

By SAM KILEY IN MANICE ON THE ALBANIA-KOSOVO BORDER

THEIR expensive leather jackets soaked with rain, their pockets emptied, all evidence of their identities taken and burnt, Pristina's middle classes joined ordinary peasants as penniless European refugees yesterday.

A dumbstruck of people surged into Albania after the Albanian authorities stopped trying to register every refugee entering the country and relieved the mounting pressure caused by murder and robbery at the hands of Serbs preying on a 60-mile backlog of misery.

"I can't believe I am here," said a computer programmer, who had his own company in Pristina. "This is something you see on the TV from Africa. This isn't something I thought that could ever happen to people like me."

"Stupid, really, but I have only just realised I am a real refugee as I crossed into Albania."

At 24, he had faced a successful future. He owned a VW Golf and a small busi-

ness, and enjoyed the same sort of popular music as any other similar European. "I am ashamed to give my name. But I want you to tell my story. That way perhaps people in the rest of Europe can understand what it is like to be a normal citizen one day, and a refugee the next."

"John", who still has a family hiding in Pristina, was ordered to board a bus at a moment's notice. "The police came to my door and said, 'pack and leave'. It was as simple as that. Get out or we'll kill you. They have been clearing everywhere. They have done it suburb-by-suburb, very carefully. So far, so far as I know, with very little killing."

The result is the line of vehicles and refugees (those bussed out are dumped five miles short of the border and forced to walk)

"I am so ashamed of myself... I somehow perhaps thought I was above anyone else, that it could not happen to me. Now I am alone, penniless," John said.



A man helps his mother as thousands of refugees walk along the track from Kosovo to the border-crossing at Blace in Macedonia yesterday

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BALKANS WAR: DOUBTS IN AMERICA

Clinton rejected warnings of fiasco

PRESIDENT CLINTON was yesterday accused of going to war despite the repeated warnings of senior US intelligence and military advisers, who told him that bombing Serbia could lead to a humanitarian disaster and a military fiasco.

As a dismayed America watched in captured soldiers being paraded on Serb television and the Kosovo conflict threatened to spiral into the worst foreign policy crisis of his presidency, Mr Clinton also found himself on the defensive on another, more familiar front, insisting that the impeachment trial stemming from his relationship with the former White House trainee Monica Lewinsky was "not a badge of shame".

For weeks before the NATO bombardment George Tenet, the CIA Director, was predicting that an air campaign might only exacerbate Serb brutality in Kosovo. At the same time, according to *The Washington Post*, several senior military advisers told the President that air power alone

Wrong-footed
President is
forced on to the
defensive, writes
Ben Macintyre
in Washington

would never halt the Serb offensive, a warning backed up by military intelligence.

Mr Clinton and his senior aides pressed ahead, wedded to a decision taken some six months ago that ground troops should not be deployed in Kosovo and would not need to be. With retribution rising and morale dropping at the White House, in the space of a few days Mr Clinton's tone has changed from bullish exhortation to something close to pleading.

"It takes a while to get up and going," he said in television interview on Wednesday



President Clinton with his national security team: Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, General Hugh Shelton, Joint Chiefs Chairman, and George Tenet, CIA Director, right

night. "I would urge all the American people, indeed the people in all the Nato nations, to stay with your leaders, to give us a chance." Senior administration spokesmen are becoming increasingly snappy and defensive, and earlier this week Mr Clinton felt it necessary to gather his top foreign policy officials for some spine-stiffening talk.

"Guys, let's not lose sight of why we did this. Let's not forget who's responsible," he reportedly told his advisers.

White House officials frankly admit that the scale and ferocity of the Serb ethnic

cleansing campaign has wrong-footed policymakers, even though intelligence sources and military analysts said that President Milosevic was preparing an onslaught throughout the peace negotiations at Rambouillet, and that airstrikes might only trigger a wave of further bloodshed.

One intelligence report, cited by *The New York Times* and completed just before airstrikes started, concluded that the Serbs planned to "ethnically cleanse" Kosovo of 1.8 million Albanians within a week. President Clinton, already haggard from a heavy cold

and allergies, is said to be losing sleep over the deteriorating situation in Kosovo and devoting all his energy to the problem. Yet he has also managed to give the impression that his mind is still not fully on the job.

Immediately after his meeting with senior advisers on Monday, Mr Clinton knocked off work for a sunny round of golf in Virginia, in a studied display of nonchalance entirely at odds with what he had just told key officials. The move also recalled former President Bush's much-criticised jaunt on a boat of Maine

while sending troops to the Gulf War.

America was once more reminded of Mr Clinton's tendency to let his mind wander from affairs of state during an interview with CBS on Wednesday night, when he dismissed his impeachment trial as a politically motivated plot. He declared he was "honoured" that the impeachment had given him the chance to defend the US Constitution. "I do not regard this impeachment vote as some great badge of shame. I do not," he said.

The sight of bruised and beaten American servicemen

in Serb captivity could undermine the already lukewarm support for military action in Kosovo, while making any possible move to send in ground troops yet more remote. Mr Clinton has repeated that he still has no intention of using combat forces, without entirely ruling out the option. Pentagon planners are belatedly exploring what few options there may be for using ground forces, including possible deployment of the crack 82nd Airborne Division to open a corridor or safety zone for fleeing refugees.

Mr Clinton knows well that political and public opposition to the use of ground forces would be fierce, and while publicly urging patience he is pressing Nato to step up the pace of airstrikes.

The Clinton Administration is tying itself in knots to avoid using the word "capture", when referring to the three soldiers now in Serb hands, referring instead to their "abduction" or even "kidnapping". Mr Clinton entered the fray in Kosovo with a commitment that US foot soldiers would not be drawn in, but already he has found himself a captive of his policy's contradictions.

US memories of Vietnam chip away at morale

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S vast generation of baby-boomers has suffered jitters about war ever since Vietnam, the searing experience of their youth.

Vietnam taught them to mistrust their Government's war aims and to be especially sceptical of "mission creep", the escalation of bombing sorties and troop levels. At the height of the Vietnam War, 450 body bags bearing the remains of American soldiers were flown home in one week.

As a result, unease is widespread and reaction to an episode like yesterday's hostage-taking of three US soldiers or the loss of a F117 fighter-bomber can be out of proportion. Risk avoidance has become a national obsession.

A classic example was President Clinton's first military fiasco in Somalia six years ago, when army rangers were ambushed. Eighteen American soldiers were killed and some of their bodies were Mu-

tiated. The uproar at home led to bipartisan congressional calls for a US withdrawal. Mr Clinton complied.

It does not help that Mr Clinton worked hard to evade the Vietnam draft. His lack of military service and the disdain he expressed then for the armed forces continue to undermine confidence in his authority now that he is Commander-in-Chief.

It was a remarkable triumph for George Bush and Colin Powell to overcome American doubts sufficiently to build the international coalition that tackled Iraq in the Gulf War. But Mr Bush had credibility as a former navy pilot who had been shot down by the Japanese. And there was an unambiguous mission to defeat President Saddam Hussein. The present mission in Kosovo is less clear-cut.

Worse, perhaps, American forces have shrunk in size and are short of spare parts and

recruits at all levels. Some retired officers point to a decline in warrior mentality among the forces. They blame the increase of women in uniform, although many perform to the highest standards.

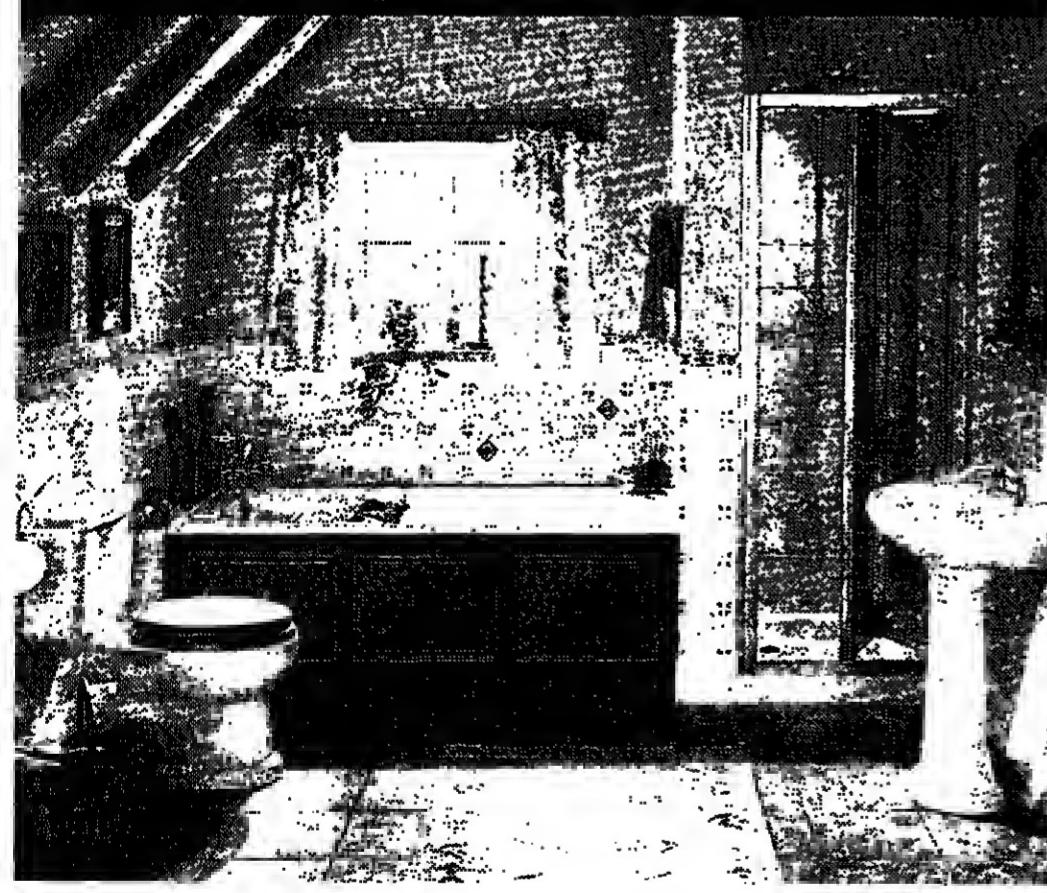
Concerns are voiced, however, that the army sometimes seems determined to turn itself into one big, happy, diverse family. Last month a meeting of sergeants-major was addressed by Lieutenant-General Claudia Kennedy, army deputy chief of staff for intelligence. She lectured them on the army's new politeness policy, dubbed "COO". This stands for Consideration of Others and she made clear that those who did not join in COO sessions were "resistant and insensitive to others". Such behaviour would not be tolerated, she said.

Many in the audience, some with four combat tours behind them, were squirming and rolling their eyes.

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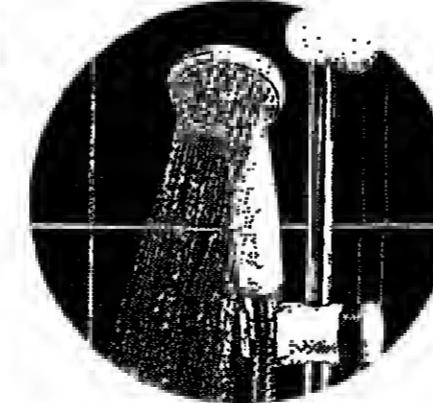
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BALKANS WAR: PRIME MINISTER UNDER PRESSURE

Blair's heavy burden of war and peace

The Prime Minister has spent a gruelling fortnight juggling Kosovo and Ulster. Philip Webster reports

Tony Blair reached the sanctuary of Chequers last night after the most gruelling fortnight any British prime minister has endured in decades. At stake, war and peace in Ulster and the Balkans.

Although aides try to maintain the image of the unflinching man of steel, he is exhausted and shows it. It would be slightly worrying if he were not.

"So immersed was Blair in the talks at Hillsborough Castle on Wednesday that he gave up his bed — he was allocated the Queen's Bedroom — to a senior Unionist and worked through the night, occasionally dozing, in a part of the building known as Lady Grey's sitting room.

Another night without sleep. But it was the sort of discomfort to which he has become accustomed in recent days. The marathon talks did not produce the breakthrough hoped for, but the process survives.

Although Northern Ireland dominated Blair's time this week, his thoughts were frequently focused elsewhere. Two weekends ago, along with President Clinton and other Nato leaders, Blair reluctantly concluded that for the second time in his brief premiership he would have to order British troops into action.

Asking young men to risk their lives for their country is the heaviest of all responsibilities, and in Blair's case, probably one to which he gave little thought as he eyed first the prize of the Labour leadership, and then the Prime Ministership. There is nothing military in his background. His father Leo was a barrister and law lecturer. The harmlessly rebellious young Blair was required during his first two years at Fettes College to be in the combined cadre force.

But his first decision involving a military matter saw him spurn the world of square-bashing and gun-snapping. Given the choice of carrying on in the CCF or joining an "outside service" scheme, he opted to help the needy.

Last December's engagement with Saddam Hussein was a skirmish compared with the lengthy and dangerous campaign on which Nato has now embarked in Belgrade. The burden of prosecuting a war would be weighty enough on its own. But while keeping himself briefed on the campaign in the Balkans, Blair has spent most of his waking hours this week desperately trying to stop the Ulster peace process collapsing, and most of last negotiating a deal on the future financing of the European Union.

A week ago yesterday Blair, after working through the night with his fellow leaders, emerged bleary-eyed at a press conference in Berlin to announce that he had secured Britain's £2 billion rebate. Then he was in his aircraft heading for Llandudno to speak to the Welsh Labour conference and launch the campaign for the Welsh elections. Some advisers told him not to do it because he had too much on his plate. He insisted. Both he and Alastair Campbell, his press secretary, slept throughout the one-hour car journey from the airport to the conference centre.

The speech itself was fairly flat. But when it came to the passage on the war, Blair roused himself and his audience. By the afternoon, he was in a BBC studio preparing and recording his nationwide address on the Kosovo crisis.

He managed some sleep at the weekend but this past week the pace has been just as relentless. He arrived in Belfast on Monday night. The next morning he breakfasted

with the Orange Order, spent 90 minutes at a school answering questions, met all the minor parties involved in the peace process, saw the husband of the murdered lawyer Rosemary Nelson, met the Garvagh Road residents' association before getting down to hours of negotiations, carrying on past midnight, with the main players. A special nerve

chain in 1939-40 and Eden during the Suez crisis. Then as now the key relationship is between the Prime Minister and the Chief of Defence Staff.

In these tension-filled days, Blair is leaning heavily on General Sir Charles Guthrie. The mutual respect is said by insiders to be considerable — as it was between Thatcher and Lord Lewin at the time of

'Once he has been convinced that the course is right, the attitude is 'OK, we do it'

the Falklands. A senior minister admits that Blair is talking more to Sir Charles than any of the Cabinet.

He became deeply impressed with Sir Charles with his clear-cut presentation of the options during the strategic defence review and when they together worked on plans for military action against Iraq three times last year: it hap-

pened on only the third occasion. When he rushed in from Ulster on Wednesday, his first meeting was with Sir Charles.

According to his close friends, Blair has had no difficulty in convincing himself that war against President Milosevic is in Britain's national interest. He believes the public backs the war because of the scenes of brutality against the fleeing ethnic Albanians, the horrors of ethnic cleaning and an innate British sense, bred through the last war, that tyrants must be confronted.

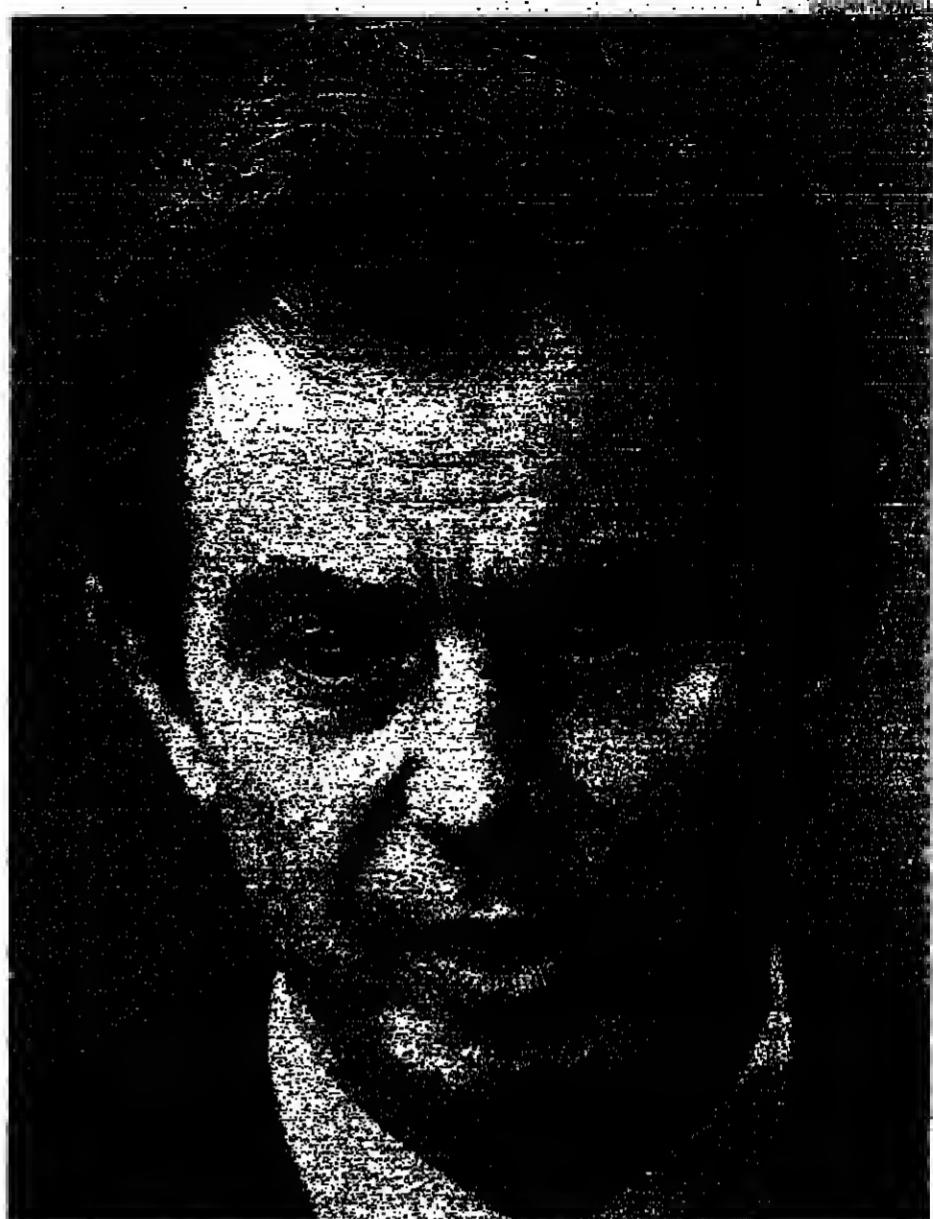
All of those sentiments are driving him. But the wider fear of a Balkan war eventually convulsing the Continent and the potential damage to Nato's credibility also worries him.

With the enlargement of Nato earlier this month, there is now a border in Hungary between it and Serbia. Blair believes that Nato cannot turn a

fronted. All of those senti-

ments are driving him. But the wider fear of a Balkan war eventually convulsing the Continent and the potential damage to Nato's credibility also worries him.

According to the senior backbencher Gerald Kaufman, Blair's Christianity is a powerful force. "He believes the Good Samaritan should not pass by on the other side. He believes that things have got to be done. He simply believes it is his job to do them."



Tony Blair in Belfast on Tuesday. He held meetings from breakfast until past midnight

'Aides are nervous about suggestions that Blair is risking burn-out'

Aides are nervous about suggestions that Blair is risking burn-out, pointing out that he often works just as hard on other, less public matters. And the hours, although long, do not compare with the general election when 20-hour days were the norm for weeks.

It is far too soon to judge Blair as a war leader. Only if and when British casualties start to happen will the nation see how he bears up to the strain. But the responsibility is weighing heavily on him.

In Berlin he often looked preoccupied. His voice occasionally faltered as he first announced that Alliance planes were again flying in anger. He has insisted on personal briefings on the targets in Nato's sights, seeking reassurance over the risks to civilian casualties.

The Prime Minister — often accused of bypassing his ministerial colleagues — has kept them fully involved in all the discussions leading up to the decision to launch air strikes. A senior Cabinet Minister says that, after Northern Ireland, Kosovo has been the subject most discussed at full Cabinet in the last three months.

The attitude to war in the Cabinet has been one of uncomfortable acceptance of its inevitability. The Minister says: "There is unease that we have been forced to this but no dissent."

Blair is relaxed when dealing with the military and, according to senior defence sources, they are happy with him. One said: "Once he has been convinced that the course is right, the attitude is 'OK, we do it.'

War leaders are made by their ability to win public confidence and to retain it when doubts begin to stir. Some prime ministers have risen to the occasion to become national leaders — Lloyd George, Churchill and Baroness Thatcher. Others have faltered — Asquith, Neville Chamberlain.

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Blair asking the public on Friday to support air strikes

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Champion rider's wife jailed for drug plot

By A CORRESPONDENT

THE wife of the former European showjumping champion Paddy McMahon has been jailed for 12 years over a £2 million cocaine shipment.

Patricia McMahon, 50, became involved in the scheme after falling in love with the drug smuggler Tony Lavene, Isleworth Crown Court was told. She was arrested last July after a four-month Customs operation uncovered the plot to import cocaine from Peru in pots of asparagus.

The court was told that McMahon, from Fringford, near Bicester, Oxfordshire, had a "lonely" marriage and fell in love with the "charming, plausible, manipulative and clever" Lavene, 54, whom she met shortly after his release from a 14-year sentence for a similar offence.

The pair rented a flat in Chelsea, and always paid their rent in cash. Although the flat had a telephone, both Lavene and McMahon were regularly seen using a payphone outside.

Philip Katz, for the defence, said: "She was consuming large amounts of cocaine, large amounts of drink and behaving in a bizarre fashion."

"Lavene always had large amounts of cash in his pockets and they were spending it like water."

The pair plotted to use McMahon's South American society contacts to arrange a shipment of 16.9kg of cocaine, the court was told. A Peruvian, Rene Black, organised for the consignment to be sent to Britain via Madrid. But British



Easter chicks: Pebbles and Bam Bam, two Cape Eagle owls born recently at Eagle Heights in the Darent Valley in Kent which breeds birds of prey

Dog track pair guilty of cruelty

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

TWO men who tied a live rabbit to a mechanical hare at a greyhound track and let a dog chase it were sentenced yesterday to 200 hours' community service after being found guilty of cruelty.

The rabbit was still alive at the end of its 20-second ordeal and was then thrown to the dog, which killed it.

Animal rights campaigners, who secretly filmed the incident last October at Albert Park race track, Hawick, in the Borders, said that the sentence was too lenient.

Frank McFarlane, track manager, and Roy Burns, a dog owner, were facing a maximum £5,000 fine, a six-month sentence and a life ban on keeping animals. The judge at Jedburgh Sheriff Court said the order reflected the fact that they were first offenders.

Murdered nanny 'wanted to leave Briton's US home'

By STEPHEN FARRELL AND DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THREE British engineer charged with murdering his children's nanny, who was his lover, in the US is thought to have beaten her to death with a wrench when she told him she wanted to end their relationship.

David Taylor, 43, is being held in custody in Connecticut accused of killing 22-year-old Slovakian-born Milena Pitkova, who was found dead from head injuries at his rented house in the affluent seaside town of Madison on Tuesday morning.

His 14-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter, who were in the house, were last night being cared for by US social services as their British mother prepared to fly out and bring them home.

Although Connecticut has the death penalty by lethal injection, it has not been used since 1977 and prosecutors

spent all of yesterday contacting the necessary people and making plans. The children are safe and will return home as soon as possible. We have made the arrangements."

Mr Taylor is thought to have called police at 12.30am on Tuesday to say he had killed someone. An autopsy showed any one of three blows Ms Pitkova received to the head would have been enough to kill her. An attempt had been made to strangle her.

Friends in Madison yesterday said Ms Pitkova grew tired of working as a nanny, having looked after the Taylor

children for three years. She wanted to move out and visit her parents in Slovakia.

"She did want to go on her own," said Holly Magee, owner of the coffee shop where Ms Pitkova worked. "I think she was getting tired of doing that kind of work. She was a very European beauty. She had a tiny build and was always immaculate."

Before moving to the US, Mr Taylor worked for Thermotool Europe in his home town of Basingstoke. The company's managing director, Paul Wallace, said Mr Taylor moved abroad because "he wanted a change" around the time of his marriage break-up.

Religious groups spared wage rule

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

STEPHEN BYERS has agreed to amend the rules on the national minimum wage to exempt members of religious communities.

The Trade and Industry Secretary is to alter the Employment Relations Bill to exempt all such communities after protests that the application of a statutory hourly rate could force them to close. In a parliamentary answer on Wednesday, Mr Byers published the Low Pay Commission's recommendation that religious communities be exempt from the minimum wage, which came into effect yesterday.

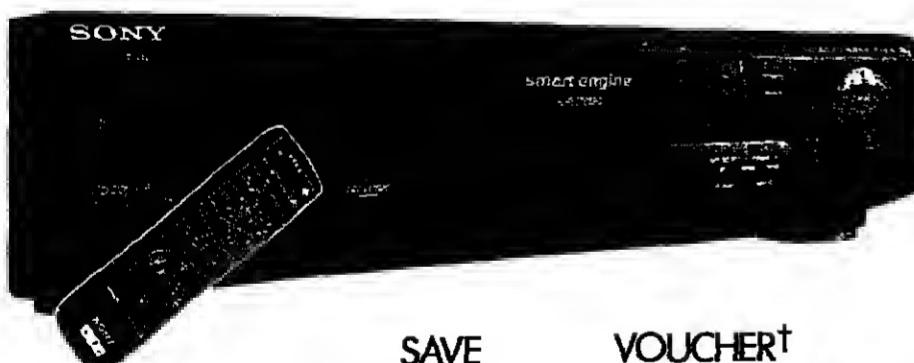
This is unlikely to affect monasteries and convents, where salaries are not generally paid, but could save communities where people devote their lives to helping others and volunteer to take subsistence wages.

The Government has now said it will have to amend the Employment Relations Bill which was carried in the Commons on Wednesday night and now goes to the Lords. "The Government accepts the commission's recommendation that members of international communities should not be covered by the national minimum wage and proposes to introduce a suitable amendment to the 1998 Act through the Employment Relations Bill," Mr Byers said yesterday.

John Redwood, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, claimed credit for the change, insisting he had made representations to Mr Byers on behalf of the bodies affected. "We have revealed yet another bungle in the minimum wage regulations," he said.

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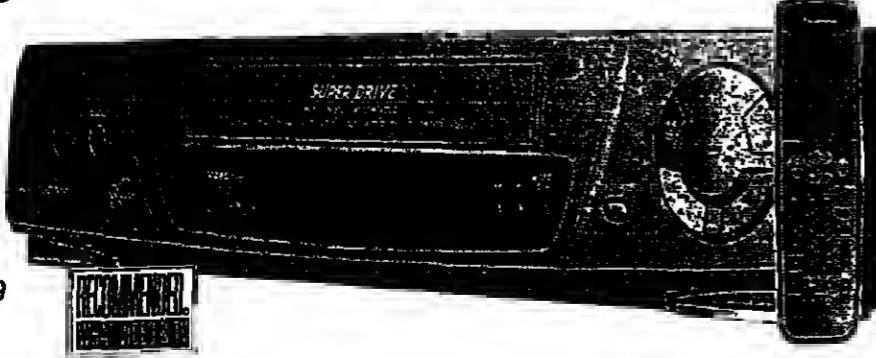


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THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999

15



Doctors argue over urgent treatment of breast cancer

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

SPECIALISTS in breast cancer have clashed over whether those with the disease have more chance of survival if they are treated within three months of first finding symptoms. The argument coincided with a government announcement that, as promised before the election, women with a suspected breast cancer would henceforth be seen within two weeks of "urgent" referral from their GP.

Two diametrically opposed papers are published by *The Lancet* today. One, based on 100,000 case studies worldwide going back 70 years, argues that 500 lives a year could be saved if delays in treatment were cut to less than three months. The other, based on 36,200 cases in Yorkshire since 1970, argues that it makes no difference to survival rates if treatment is delayed for longer than that, and that keeping the Government's promise will divert resources from more urgent services.

The international study was made by collating evidence from 87 research papers. Carried out by a team led by Mike

Richards, head of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund team at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital in London, it found that in a third of cases the interval between a woman noticing a symptom and being treated exceeded three months. The long-term survival rate among those treated between three and six months after the symptom was noticed was 5 per cent lower than among those treated more promptly.

The longer treatment was de-

layed, the worse the chances of survival became. "The tumours grow and the disease progresses to an advanced stage which is more difficult to treat," Professor Richards said. "Even moderate delays are likely to alter the number of deaths."

The other study, by Richard Sainsbury, consultant breast surgeon at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, focused on 5,700 patients diagnosed between 1986 and 1990; patients who were treated in fewer than 30

GPs TO BE ALERTED TO UNCOMMON SYMPTOMS

Although the breast screening programme picks up about 7,000 early cases of cancer a year, three quarters of tumours are diagnosed after doctors suspect that women have developed symptoms of the disease (Ian Murray writes). In about 70 per cent of cases the symptom is a lump — although only 10 per cent of women with a lump have cancer — but the other symptoms are less well known, even to GPs. The NHS Breast Screening Programme and the Cancer Research Campaign are drawing up a checklist to help doctors to identify them.

Women who have less-common symptoms are more likely to delay seeing their doctor, and

days from the time the symptom appeared had significantly worse outcomes because they had a more aggressive form of the disease. He argues that treating all patients more quickly would not significantly alter the number of deaths.

"Cancer takes many years to develop and you are not going to tell me that by the time the tumours become palpable it is going to make any difference if treatment is delayed a month or so," Mr Sainsbury said.

Doctors are less likely to refer them quickly to a specialist than those who have a lump. Older women, those from minority ethnic groups and those with a lower level of education all tended to delay seeking advice from their doctor.

The list of cancer symptoms includes: persistent localised lumpiness in the breast of a woman over 30; inversion of one nipple; bloodstained discharge from a nipple; persistent infection in the breast of a woman who is not breast feeding; new dimpling of the skin; and eczema around the nipple.

Half the women who have breast cancer wait about a month after detecting a symptom before going to see their GP.



Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, who turns 60 next year, visits an Edinburgh optician to promote yesterday's introduction of free eye-tests for the over-60s

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Cervical smear programme 'not cost-effective'

BY OUR MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

SMEAR tests have led to a 35 per cent fall in the number of cases of cervical cancer and probably saved 800 lives in 1997 alone, according to a study published today.

In spite of the success, however, too much money is being spent on the programme according to researchers from the national cancer registration bureau at the Office for National Statistics.

They write in the *British Medical Journal* that the service is not cost-effective largely because many women have a test every three years instead of every five years as recommended. This pushes the cost up to £132 million a year. "This is about four times the cost of the breast-screening programme, which aims to reduce annual breast cancer deaths by 1,250.

"Costs of cervical screening could be reduced substantially, with little loss in effectiveness, by screening all women every five years — there is little benefit but enormous increase in costs in opportunistic screening

In 1988, when the national programme began, 42 per cent of women took part but this quickly rose to the present 85 per cent, with 4.5 million smears a year.

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April 1: the day that fools weathermen

Yesterday was one of the hottest, but snow is perplexingly common, reports Adam Sherwin

SHAKESPEARE wrote of "the uncertain glory of an April day" but All Fool's Day, one of the most capricious in the weather calendar, produced temperatures to rival the hottest on record yesterday.

Easter holidaymakers revelled in the sun as temperatures reached 21C (69.8F) in London and the South West, challenging the hottest April 1 of the century, 22.6C (72.9F) recorded at Wryde, Cambridgeshire, in 1907 and the runner-up, 22C (71.6F) at Cromer, Norfolk, in 1990.

Although forecasts that the temperature could reach 23C (73.4F) proved optimistic, central and southern England still put many other parts of the world in the shade. A cloudy Rome reached 18C (64.4F), New York and Madrid managed only 16C (60.8F) and Athens languished with thunderstorms and 15C (59F). Paris was a rarity in mainland Europe, enjoying 21C and some sun.

Predicting the weather for April 1 has confounded meteorologists. A white Easter is more common than a white Christmas for many Britons:



Scarborough fair: a stroll on the resort's South Bay beach was one way to enjoy British temperatures that exceeded those of Rome, Madrid and Athens yesterday at 21C (69.8F)

snow has fallen during the Easter break 12 times in the past 40 years. Last year, Wales and the North West suffered power cuts after heavy snowfalls and the Midlands had some of the most severe floods this century.

The worst Easter weekends in recent memory were 1994, which began with severe

storms on Good Friday and continued with widespread lowland snow, and 1964, when temperatures barely reached 6C (42.8F) and raw winds led to the coldest Easter Day for 81 years.

The warmest Easter weekends since the Second World War were in 1960, 1965 and 1984. The Meteorological Of-

fice believes that Easter 1949 was the best this century, when temperatures in London rose to 29C (84.2) on Easter Saturday.

Yesterday's sunshine and cloudless skies were due to a band of high pressure sweeping up from the Azores. The front was predicted by Piers Corbyn, whose Weather

Action forecast centre uses the Solar Weather Technique. Pinning down All Fool's Day is an annual challenge, he said.

"Our long-range forecast

from last September held up well: we said it would be pretty hot. You can get such an extraordinary variation, from sun to snow, sometimes in the same day." An explanation for

April Fool's Day fluctuations across the years was offered by Stephen Roberts, managing director of Cunningham Weathernet, which provides weather information to the insurance industry.

"In spring, Britain comes under the influence of a high altitude jetstream. A slight shift in this stream and the country

can suddenly fall beneath northerly Arctic winds or warm southerly ones," he said.

Amateur meteorologists have discovered their own methods for divining the weather on April 1. Peggy Cole uses country lore based on observing the natural world around her Ipswich home. She

TIMES PAST

On this day in 1907 (Adam Sherwin writes), *The Times* reported: The Prince of Wales came to the aid of an upturned cab carriage in Windsor. He fetched his tools and corrected the damage. Upon learning that the driver had been in the Army, his Royal Highness sent him on his way with half a sovereign. The Home Secretary advised the King to commute a capital punishment sentence passed on Horace George Rayner to life imprisonment. Mr Rayner said: "I would prefer to get the whole business over and done with instead of having to endure years of misery behind bars." The Labour Party has emerged as a "new and powerful" group in Parliament. *The Times* gives warning that the party's "financial and electoral power lies with the trade unions" and notes that "the working classes voted mainly Labour in the general election but they did not vote for socialism".

is not surprised that the 1907 peak has not been topped.

"The blackthorn shrub is still one mass of white blossom, so it won't be all that wonderful," she said. "When the leaves fall off and the daffodils start to look tired, then summer will be upon us."

Forecast, page 28

Radio HQ besieged after pop hoax

By RUSSELL JENKINS
NORTH WEST CORRESPONDENT

ANGRY parents and children gathered outside the Radio City commercial station in Liverpool yesterday to protest at an April Fool's Day prank.

A disc jockey at the station said that the chart-topping group Steps would be appearing on the steps of St George's Hall in the city centre at midday to say thank you to their loyal fans.

Several hundred children, many with parents in tow, went to the famous landmark only to learn that they had been fooled. About 50 then marched to the station's headquarters in Stanley Street, where staff barricaded the door.

The children and parents held an impromptu demonstration while staff attempted to placate them by distributing Easter eggs.

Pamela Rotherham, who had taken her eight-year-old niece as a treat, said: "This is a very sick April Fool's Day prank. The kids are so disappointed."

"I brought my niece along as a birthday present because she is nine tomorrow. She was close to tears. She absolutely idolises the band. I don't know how to console her."

Tom Hunter, managing director of Radio City, later apologised for the upset. "We were under siege for a few hours. The only thing we could do was throw hundreds of Easter eggs at everybody to try to placate them."

"Nothing like this has happened before. There were quite a few children involved. Some of their parents were also taken in and they got quite angry."

Early man has years lopped off his age

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE human species is half a million years younger than previously believed, according to two British anthropologists.

After taking a new look at fossil remains found in Africa, they suggest that two species previously called *Homo* ought properly to belong to a pre-human genus, *Australopithecus*.

If the reclassification suggested by Bernard Wood and Mark Collard is accepted, the first creature to merit the name *Homo* is the early form of *Homo erectus*, which appeared on the scene 1.9 million years ago. This was the species that first left Africa and colonised the world.

The scientists say that two earlier species, *Homo habilis* and *Homo rudolfensis*, should really be classified as australopithecines — ancestors of man rather than man himself. The earliest traces of *habilis* date from 2.3 million years ago, and of *rudolfensis* from 2.4 million years ago.

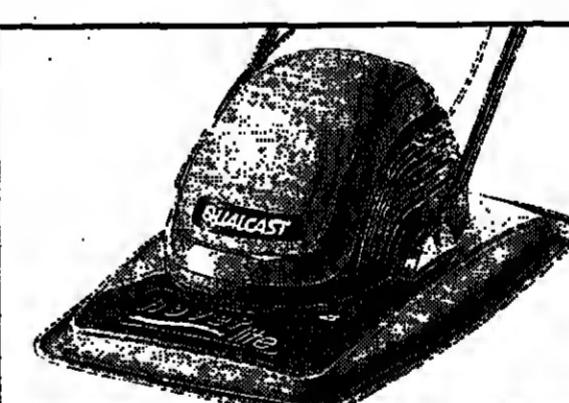
The naming and classification of species, especially human and pre-human species, has always been controversial. The competition to find the earliest species that can be classified as man is intense.

Professor Wood, of George Washington University in Washington DC, and Dr Collard, of University College London, write in *Science* that there are many reasons to exclude *habilis* from the genus *Homo*. Body mass and proportions, the shape of the skeleton, the size of the teeth and jaws, and evidence that the species had an extended period of growth and development all had to be taken into account.

Early *Homo erectus* gave rise to a later form that was the first inhabitant of Britain, Boxgrove Man. He lived in what is now Sussex 500,000 years ago.

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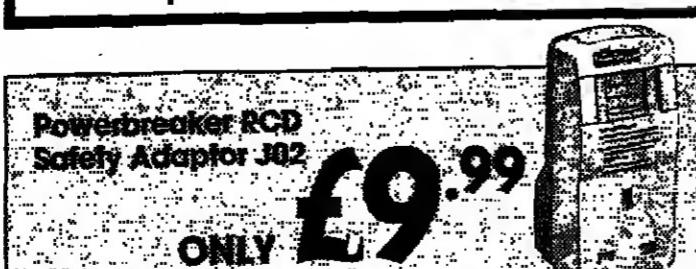
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Restraints tested to reduce injuries

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

POLICE are to test leg restraints to see if they can reduce injuries from violent prisoners who kick and headbut officers after arrests, the Association of Chief Police Officers confirmed yesterday.

Sussex Police will test one system that uses Velcro straps and another known as the Viper — Violent Persons Restraint System — which uses webbing to hold the arms and ankles. Northamptonshire Po-

lice, said that many officers were injured by prisoners who lashed out as they got in or out of police vans. The restraints could also prevent headbutting because prisoners would not be able to keep their balance to launch such an attack. All three types of restraint had been passed by a medical expert in accident trauma.

"We are trying to do our best to make people safer — not only ourselves but also the inmates," Mr Boatman said.

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Adams facing 'impossible' task over arms

TO SIGN up to the two Prime Ministers' declaration on April 13, Gerry Adams will have to do what he and his Sinn Fein colleagues have from the outset insisted they cannot do: persuade the IRA to disarm.

It will be an extraordinarily tough task. The IRA does not consider itself to have been defeated and sees disarmament as tantamount to surrender. In Ireland's long history of armed struggle, there is a tradition of arms being put away to rust, but never of their being given up.

The declaration is also likely to be seen as a rewriting of the Good Friday accord as a result of Unionist intransigence. Sinn Fein argued, with some justification, that the accord set no barriers to Sinn Fein's admission to government.

However, it does aim to create the best possible environment for Mr Adams to set about the task.

It guarantees Sinn Fein its two ministerial posts in Northern Ireland's government, provided disarmament takes place. (Republicans had hitherto suspected that any act of decommissioning would merely lead to a new demand from

Declaration likely to be seen as rewriting of Good Friday accord, says Martin Fletcher

Unionists whose real agenda was to keep them out of the executive. It also does its best to remove any connotations of surrender, or of the IRA having to comply with a Unionist pre-condition that was not in the Good Friday accord.

The document describes decommissioning as an "obligation", not a "pre-condition". It talks of weapons being put "beyond use", not surrendered or handed over, and of that being done "on a voluntary basis". Decommissioning would be part of an "act of reconciliation" that would involve further moves towards the reduction of the British military presence in Northern Ireland, and could see loyalist paramilitaries giving up arms as well.

In other words, the IRA would be a step too far.

not be required to act unilaterally in a way that might suggest it alone was responsible for the past 30 years of "troubles".

The 12-day hiatus while the parties consider the document gets the republican movement past Easter, a hallowed period in its calendar because of the 1916 Easter rising. There would be no barter period for the IRA to give up arms.

It also leaves General John de Chastelain, head of the disarmament body, to determine the manner of decommissioning, not Unionists.

"I don't think we can be confident, but we can be hopeful of moving forward," Mr Adams said.

The risk for Mr Adams is that he will split the IRA. Some hardliners left in the autumn of 1997 because they opposed the peace process, and the so-called Real IRA was winning fresh recruits from the IRA before last August's Omagh bombing.

Other hardliners, notably in the republican stronghold of South Armagh, have grown disenchanted and may consider the giving up of arms, under whatever guise, to be a step too far.

'IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY IF THIS DIFFERENCE OF VIEW ABOUT TIMING . . . PREVENTED THE AGREEMENT FROM ADVANCING'

THE declaration delivered by the two Prime Ministers at Hillsborough Castle yesterday opens by emphasising the historic opportunity for a new beginning offered by last year's Good Friday agreement, if then details what has been achieved.

Changes to both the Irish Constitution and British constitutional legislation, based on the principle of consent, had been approved. The Northern Ireland Assembly was elected last June. The international agreement signed in Dublin on March 8 provided for the establishment of the north-south ministerial council and implementation bodies.

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission had been established and its members appointed, and the new Equality

Commission has been legislated for. Comparable steps by Dublin were under way.

The needs of victims of violence and their families were being addressed in both countries. Commitments in the agreement over economic, social and cultural issues were being carried forward.

Steps had been taken towards normalisation of security arrangements and practices, while the Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland and the review of criminal justice were both well advanced in their work.

The declaration's text then says: "There is agreement among all parties that decommissioning is not a precondition but is an obligation deriving from their commitment in the agreement.

and that it should take place within the time-scale envisaged in the agreement, and through the efforts of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning."

Sinn Fein have acknowledged these obligations but are unable to indicate the timescale on which decommissioning will begin. They do not regard the agreement as imposing any requirement to make a start before the establishment of the new institutions. The UUP do not wish to move to the establishment of the new institutions without some evident progress with decommissioning.

"It would be a tragedy if this difference of view about timing and the sequence of events prevented the implementation of the agreement from advancing.

We believe that decommissioning will only happen against a background where:

implementation is actively moving forward. Continued progress in establishing the new institutions will in itself create confidence. On the other hand, if it is understandable that those who take the next steps in implementation should seek to be assured that these steps are not irrevocable; if, in the event, no progress is made with decommissioning.

"We therefore propose the following way forward.

"On [date to be set] nominations will be made under the d'Hondt procedure of those to take up office as ministers when powers are devolved.

"At a date to be proposed by the Independent International

Commission on Decommissioning but not later than four months after:

the finalisation of the process of decommissioning and vice versa. This will see something put beyond use on a voluntary basis in a manner which will be verified by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. Further moves on normalisation and democratisation in recognition of the changed situation on security.

"In addition to the arrangements in respect of military material, there will at all times be ceremonies of remembrance of all victims of violence, in which representatives of all parties and the two governments and all churches will be invited.

"Around the time of the act of

reconciliation, powers will be devolved and the British-Irish Agreement will enter into force.

The following institutions will then be established: the North-South Ministerial Council, the North-South Implementation Bodies, the British-Irish Council and the British-Irish Inter-governmental Conference.

"By [one month after nomination date], the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning will make a report on progress. If it is understood by all that the successful implementation of the agreement will be achieved if these steps are taken within the proposed timescales, if they are not taken, the nominations mentioned above will fail to be confirmed by the assembly."



Fudge allows Trimble to endorse the declaration

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE declaration by Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern gives David Trimble just about enough "wriggle room" to endorse it without reneging on his repeated pledges to fellow Unionists never to admit Sinn Fein to Northern Ireland's new executive without a prior act of IRA disarmament.

It envisages sparing out ministerial posts before any decommissioning has taken place, but, at that stage, no devolution from London of actual power to what would effectively be an executive-in-waiting.

Mr Trimble can argue that this does not constitute the formation of an executive, or even a shadow executive, and there would be no obvious obligation on him to convene any meetings.

The Prime Minister's document blatantly ducks the question of whether devolution of power should take place before or after decommissioning. It merely says that devolution will take place "around the time" of the "act of reconciliation".

The document states that decommissioning is an "obliga-

tion" under the Good Friday accord and should be completed within two years. Mr Trimble will be able to present that as an unequivocal endorsement by the British and Irish Governments of his interpretation of the accord, as opposed to Sinn Fein's.

It also gives Mr Trimble what one official called a "communication cord" if the IRA fails to disarm. It commits all parties to the proposition that if decommissioning does not occur the Assembly will not confirm the nominations to the executive.

"I believe that the declaration has the potential to resolve satisfactorily the problems we have encountered with regard to proceeding with implementing the Good Friday accord," Mr Trimble said.

However, the First Minister must do a powerful selling job in the next 12 days and may well have to stave off a direct attempt by anti-accord Unionists to have the declaration rejected.

Unionists in the Assembly are divided 29-29 between those in favour of the accord and those opposed. If Mr Trimble loses any of those in favour, he will lose his majority. Constitutionally he needs only 40 per cent of the Unionist vote to approve key decisions, but in practice the loss of his majority would mean the loss of his authority.

"Technically I could continue if I lost one or more members, but morally I would be defeated and could not carry on much longer," he acknowledged recently.

Anti-accord members of his Ulster Unionist Party need only 60 signatures to convene an emergency meeting of the party's ruling council, where they could force a vote on the declaration.

But this is less of a threat to Mr Trimble. It is doubtful if the dissenters could succeed in calling a meeting before April 13 or that they would win the vote if they did.

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Midnight fireworks in Iqaluit mark the birth of the territory of Nunavut yesterday

Mounties to say sorry as new territory is born

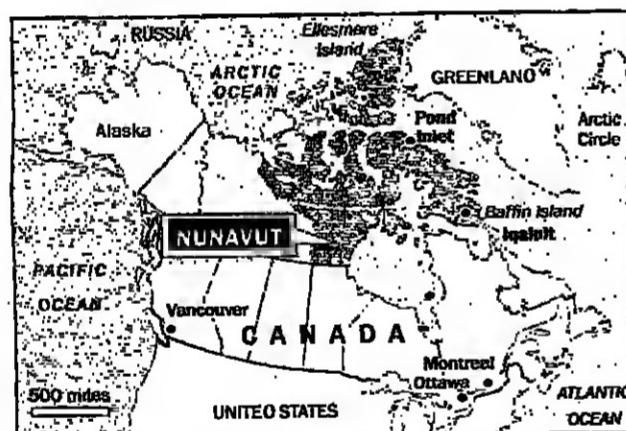
By GILES WHITTELL

CANADA'S newest and largest territory came into being yesterday with a midnight firework display in sub-zero weather, a feast of raw seal meat, and the promise of an apology from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for their past sins against native Inuits.

Nunavut, meaning "our land", boasts 750,000 caribou but only one human per 39 square miles. In the first re-drawing of the North American map in half a century, it became a separate territory at a ceremony attended by 1,000 shivering dignitaries.

The vast new entity, bigger than France, Germany, Italy and Spain combined, was hailed by its new leaders as an unprecedented experiment in self-government for native Canadians. Jane Stewart, the Indian Affairs Minister, called it "proof we are committed to reconciling aboriginal rights".

Promises of self-determination and lavish federal funding brought an astonishing 99 per cent of voters to the polls in the region's remotest districts, far north of the Arctic Circle, when its first election was held



LINKS:
[The Nunavut Land Claim Agreement](http://www.jeanes.gc.ca/pubs/territories/index.html)
[Nunavut Tourism](http://www.commerce.ca/abwest.html)
[More about the celebrations](http://www.nunavutaborations.ca/index_e.html)

per cent of the population but suffer from rampant drug and alcohol abuse and a suicide rate six times the national average. Nothing reflected the challenge more than its new leaders: Paul Okalik, the territory's first Premier, and James Arvaluk, the Education Minister, have both served jail terms for alcohol-related offences.

Haunted by the trauma of forced relocations by police to the region's northernmost islands in the 1950s, older natives languish on welfare and 3,000 of Iqaluit's 4,500 population receive federal support.

WORLD IN BRIEF

More deaths on Spice Islands

The Spice Islands have been hit by a fresh outbreak of Christian-Muslim violence that has claimed several lives, including those of a priest and his son (David Warratt writes). By last night clashes on Ambon island involving machetes, arrows and shotguns had killed seven and injured many more, prompting people to flee. The latest unrest, sparked by anti-Muslim graffiti and a property dispute, centres on the town of Tual, 330 miles southeast of the provincial capital Ambon, which has seen some 200 people die in sectarian violence since January.

Quake aid 'too slow'

Gwal, India: Reports of inadequate relief efforts dominated national newspapers as another tremor toppled buildings in the Himalayan mountains of northern India yesterday, killing one person. Authorities feared more deaths in aftershocks from Monday's quake, in which at least 100 people died. The head of government of the stricken Indian state said he lacked the money to cope with the disaster. (AP)

Anwar trial ends

Kuala Lumpur: The marathon trial on four corruption charges of Anwar Ibrahim, the ousted Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, has ended after 77 days with the judge saying he needed extra time to give his verdict. Judge Augustine Paul postponed giving a verdict from April 6 to April 14, saying that the length of the submissions from both sides meant that

TV talk shows in dock for murder

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH
IN WASHINGTON

TRASH television talk shows are about to be exposed in a trial after a murder that involved a male participant who was confronted by an admirer who turned out to be a man.

Jonathan Schmitz says that when he went on a chat show to discover which of his friends had a secret crush on him he expected to be confronted with a woman. Instead he was introduced to his friend, Scott Amedure, who went on to outline his fantasy involving the two of them lashing out with whipped cream, strawberries and champagne. Three days later Mr Schmitz bought a shotgun, went to Mr Amedure's home and killed him.

The Jenny Jones Show, which engineered the encounter, is charged with complicity in the death. Geoffrey Fieger, the prosecution lawyer, will

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It's hip to have a square



It is hard to see how the innocent headscarf got itself such a bad reputation. But there it is. The very word summons up visions of redoubtable females of a certain age, their heads wrapped in a firmly knotted length of material with which they are keeping in place their lower jaw (if posh) or their curlers (if not).

Still, the caprices of fashion work in unexpected ways, and after the unlikely rehabilitation of such terminally uncool articles as the Dr Scholl sandal, the desert boot and the Liberty flower print, it is now the headscarf's turn for a moment of fashion glory.

My mother, when I was growing up, always used to have at least two headscarves on the go — one knotted under her chin in the manner favoured by the Queen when she is out riding, and another attached to the handle of her bag. What the point of the second one was anybody's guess. Bandage? Emergency dog lead? Fallback handkerchief? Blindfold for leading panicking horses out of a blazing stable? Whatever its theoretical purpose, I never saw the handbag scarf in action — although quite often they would stealthily untie themselves and get lost, which resulted in a good deal of lamentation and a pri-

vate resolution on my part never to bother with anything so pointless. But recantation is second nature to fashion victims. So I am only slightly surprised to find myself the doting owner of two glossy silk squares from which, this time last year, I would have recoiled with contempt. The process of conversion began with Hermès.

For a long time I have admired the exquisite workmanship and intricate

beauty of that company's classic silk scarves without ever really wanting to own one — too grand, I felt, for my somewhat haphazard look (Jane Birkin on a good day, the White Queen on a bad one).

But this season, alongside its distinctive classics, Hermès has produced a clutch of fresh, breezy designs: small silk squares to drape over the nape of the neck, peasant-style (like peasant, admittedly) and, for the beach or a summer picnic, cotton squares that claim to be machine-washable.

The designs, too, are less hieratic, brighter, with a strong element of fantastical narrative. Each scarf is described in the Hermès promo-

tional booklet with a sort of little prose poem. "Each earthly day dying in blazing agony, so that each dawn can be reborn in the quartz of alarm clocks..." runs the baffling text that accompanies *Cosmos*, a very pretty sky-blue design with Apollo in his chariot and a scattering of jacquard stars.

This kind of thing may enrage you or amuse you, depending on your tolerance for the French habit of intellectualising everything, even scarves. It should not deter you from investigating the new collection, which contains some dazzlingly pretty ideas, including *Charmes des Plages Normandes*

— a seaside scene in vivid colours, *Azulejos*, a delicate pale-blue design based on 18th-century Portuguese tiles, and *Amours*, a giant daisy surrounded by cupids, mistletoe, bees and other symbols of love.

Large scarves are around £160, smaller ones £52. Cotton scarves, including a 1930s-inspired pattern with aircraft and famous pilots, are £110, and there are even children's silk scarves, packaged in little "book" boxes, printed with a com-

plete story — choose from *The Fickle Budgerigar*, *Clovis the Crocodile* or *Louisa's Summer*, £63.

It these prices make you reel, Laura Ashley is putting up a brave show as a poor girl's Hermès, with some inspired Italian silk prints for around £30. Cream silk squares with delicate 19th-century bicyclists in pale blue and navy, or a garden design of bay trees, classical urns, flowerpots and artists' palettes are £30, or for £25 there is a small silk chiffon square with a French harbour scene of narrow houses and little boats.

Liberty takes up the horticultural theme with small squares printed with sweet peas, nasturtiums and daisies, £49. Larger versions of the same design are £75. Stylised sunflowers on silk chiffon are £95.

These Liberty prints reflect perfectly the spirit of the Liberty-inspired sundresses and floaty skirts now to be had in every store from Jigsaw to Joseph. But if you feel like getting creative over Easter, Liberty's fabric department has lots of material in matching prints. For Easter Monday you could have run up a little frock. Add a straw basket and a pair of espadrilles, and there you are, transformed at the flick of a headscarf into an Eric Roehmer heroine.

CUTTING EDGE

JANE SHILLING

— a seaside scene in vivid colours, *Azulejos*, a delicate pale-blue design based on 18th-century Portuguese tiles, and *Amours*, a giant daisy surrounded by cupids, mistleto-

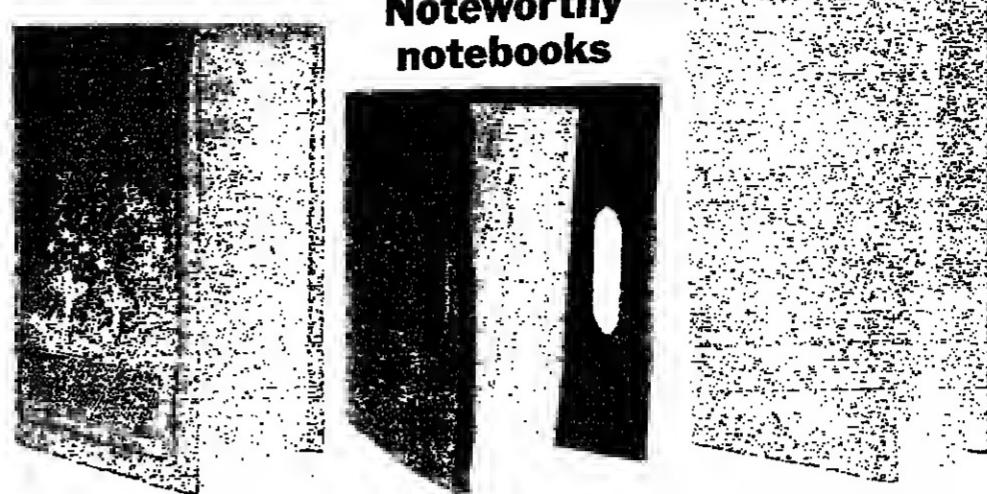
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SIX OF THE BEST

Noteworthy notebooks



EMBROIDERED, £37

Expensive but the fuchsia silk grasshopper-embroidered book cover is removable, extending the life of this Vietnamese embroidered trinket.
Minh Mang, 182 Battersea Park Road SW11 (0171-498 3233)

10/10

GREY FELT, £59

Thick and made from felt, this has handles — doubling as a cool bag seen on the laps of fashion editors at showtime.
Nicole Farhi Home, 17 Clifford Street W1 (0171-949 0501)

8/10

BORN TO SHOP, £25

Made in leather, etched in gold and filled with the trademark lined blue paper, this is for the serious shopaholic who needs to catalogue excessive purchasing and future desires.
Smythson, 40 New Bond Street W1 (0171-629 8558)

7/10

CHECK, £7.25

Checked silk fabric in pastel shades of lilac, mint and pink. Beautiful chunky notebook with paper in alternate sheets of purple and green.
Paperchase, 3-4 Percy Street W1 (0171-580 8496)

10/10

SUEDE, £29.95

Purple suede book of hand-made paper with "happiness", "forget me not", "joy" and "adventure" embossed on the front.
Conran Shop, 81 Fulham Road SW3 (0171-589 7401)

7/10

PINK PLASTIC, £4.50

Available in a huge array of colours and sizes with a plastic cover and metal tag holder for correct labelling. Plain white paper inside.
Paperchase, 3-4 Percy Street W1 (0171-580 8496)

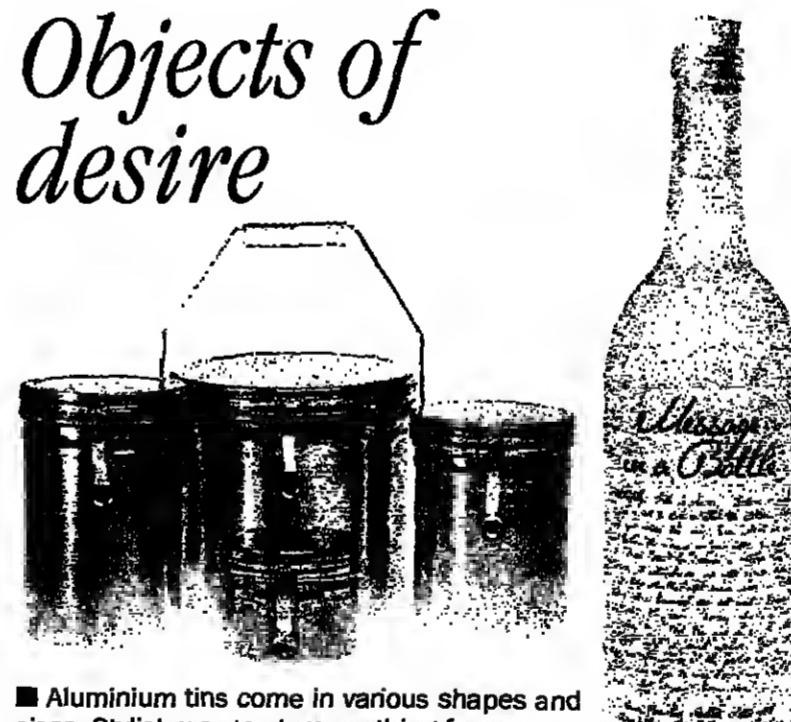
9/10

COMPILED BY DEBORAH BRETT

HOT TIP

Eyebrows may shape the face but blondes have a tendency to end up looking like Groucho Marx when they try to fill them in. The answer is Ruby & Millie's eyebrow-shaper palette in Zero: half is colour; half a clear balm to keep brows in shape. £8 from Ruby & Millie at large Boots stores nationwide (0171-636 7911).

Objects of desire

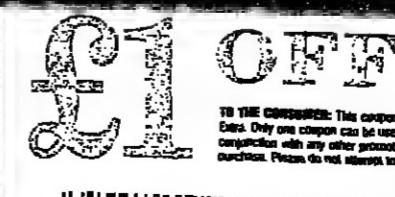


■ Aluminium tins come in various shapes and sizes. Stylish way to store anything from teabags to spaghetti. From £12-£30 at Debenhams (0171-408 4444)

■ Eau de nil-coloured bubble bath is made from blue algae, spirulina and sea kelp. In a delightful frosted glass bottle with a gushy message written on it. Message in a Bottle is almost too beautiful to use. £20 by Philosophy, from Space NK (0870 169 9999)

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My mother, the football fan

At the age of 74, the mother of Mark Palmer has become a keen supporter of Reading

It was her idea. "I would love to watch a football match at the new Reading stadium," my 74-year-old mother said without warning one day over Sunday lunch. I thought little of it at the time. She had seemed to mention it in passing in the way that people say they would love to have lunch, but the diary never gets opened.

My mother's Saturday afternoon passions have rarely strayed beyond turning over the compost heap in her country garden, visiting friends or supporting local charities in her role as a Deputy Lieutenant of Berkshire.

So I took my son to the next home game and afterwards we called in for tea and chocolate biscuits and she said: "You are lucky. He never takes me." I was on the telephone to the Reading box office on Monday morning before you could shout "Come on you Rs." Best seats in the house, please. Next to the directors' box. My mother and me.

It was to be Reading versus Wycombe Wanderers. Not exactly a top of the table clash, but a local derby on a spring afternoon in a spanking new £35 million all-seater stadium just off the M4 at Exit 11.

She had nearly two weeks to prepare. So did I. She had never been to a football match—unless you count standing on a muddy touchline watching me play for the under-tens in the Sixties. I always assumed that she hated the game.

Unlike my father. We used to go to watch Reading together—in fact it was one of the last things we did before he died. But, come to think of it, my mother did show an unexpected degree of interest in the World Cup. I remember her ringing me in France when England got knocked out and she sounded genuinely steamed up about the man she called "David Beckham".

The pre-match build-up was intense. My mother has been ill and cannot walk far, so I telephoned the stadium and they kindly provided a parking space next to the main entrance. Then my mother got butterflies about getting stuck in traffic. She wanted to leave home at noon, which would mean getting there almost three hours before kick-off. "Just to be on the safe side," she said.

I called the stadium again

and booked us in for the three-course £24.99 lunch in the Royal Restaurant and hoped that each course would take an hour. Then there was the question of what she should wear. "You'll be in a tie, won't you?" she asked. I said I would not and that we were going to a football match, not to the members' enclosure at Newbury races.

When we arrived at the Madejski Stadium (my mother in her Husky jacket, silk scarf and handbag not dissimilar to the one the Queen carries when on duty), she made a dash for the Megastore where you can practically furnish your house and dress from head to toe in Reading FC merchandise.

"What lovely slippers," she said, before stopping at the sweatshirt section and persuading me to buy an old-style Reading shirt with a number 9 on the back in memory of our most famous player, Robin Friday, who died of booze and drugs.

We stretched lunch as long as possible and were in our seats by 2.45pm, only to learn that the kick-off had been delayed 15 minutes. No matter. She was enjoying the chants and rose to her feet when our lot began singing: "If you hate Wycombe stand up."

A large man with a long ponytail was sitting in front of us and his language was colourful, but it didn't faze my mother. Then she turned against the referee for giving the "red team", as she called them, an unnecessary number of free kicks. Her blood boiled when one of our defenders got a thump in the head.

Reading scored, but then Wycombe were awarded a penalty and we had a man sent off in the process. They missed the penalty, but by that stage my mother was confused. She counted up the number of blue shirts and realised Reading had only ten men. It took until half-time to explain that we would be playing with ten men for the rest of the match.

She went walkabout near the pie stand during the break. When I found her she was engaged in conversation with an elderly couple. The man had been coming to watch Reading since 1943, but this was the first time he had

brought his wife. The two foot-ball virgins got on famously and my mother was surprised that the second half started without her.

Reading scored a second. She said: "This is wonderful." Then Wycombe pulled one back and she got nervous. With five minutes to go I suggested it might be wise to leave so as to miss the queues. "We can't go now," she said. "It's far too exciting." Reading held on and at the final whistle she applauded the team off the pitch and smiled broadly. She was 74 going on 14.

It took us nearly an hour to get out of the car park. Then she said: "Can we come next week?"

I think we'll be on the coach to Wigan before the season's up, my mother wearing the polyester away strip with a number 9 on the back, waving a can of lager above her head. Funny old game.

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A game of two halves: Mark Palmer and his mother at the £35 million Madejski Stadium. They got there three hours before kick-off, just to be on the safe side

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Pass me another cup of civet poop

Today I have something important to ask those of you who (a) count yourselves true coffee connoisseurs, and (b) also have medical cover which does not specifically exclude treatment for illnesses resulting from the ingestion of animal poop.

Tell me honestly: did you find that your coffee tasted just a tad bitter this morning?

Was it lacking that smooth flavour you can only be sure of getting when the world's finest coffee beans have been passed through the alimentary canal of a civet, and are then lovingly collected by coffee roasters who — I'll bet you're ahead of me here — turn this civet poop into pricey, aromatic coffee which you can serve to your guests without even letting them in on the joke?

Then I suggest you go to your coffee supplier and tell him firmly that you're not leaving his shop until he provides you with coffee beans which were once civet faeces — just like the prized Vietnamese coffee you just read about in *The Wall Street Journal*.

For those of you who think nobody would actually drink a liquid made from the stools of a fox-like animal, the *Journal* reports that there's nothing tastier than coffee brewed from civet poop — at least to a thirsty Vietnamese.

"With its long, sensitive snout," the *Journal* reported on its front page, "you see how big this story is," "this finicky eater is legendary among old-time coffee growers here for sniffing out the best ripe robusta coffee beans and eating them from the low branches of the coffee bush. The hardest beans survive the digestive process intact and, according to aficionados, are improved by it." Samantha Marshall, who reported this scoop, says the flavour's best if you don't wash the beans.



**MAN
UNDERNEATH**

JOE JOSEPH

paramilitary movement? "Civet Commander: "How did the dirty protest go, young firebrand?" Civet Firebrand: "I think they ate it." Commander: "Ha ha, that'll make them choke, and teach them not to mess with civets." Firebrand: "Actually, they loved it. They've gone looking for more." Commander: "Yuk! They're nothing but animals."

A timely reminder for all tyrants

Michael Pinto-Duschinsky

examines the Sawoniuk verdict

The conviction of Anthony Sawoniuk has a significance far beyond ensuring justice for the Jews he killed in Belarus in 1942. It vindicates the courage of a small band of politicians, including Lord Janner, Lord Merlyn-Rees, Lord Hurd of Westwell and Lord Patten, who, as MPs, fought fierce prejudice in the Lords to enact the War Crimes legislation under which the trial was brought. It also provides a warning to today's tyrants, not least in the Balkans.

Doubtless, there will be the usual cries on behalf of the guilty men of the Nazi era. Why now? Is it not time to forgive and forget the horrors of Nazism for the sake of the new Europe? Will not "revenge" lead to renewed anti-Semitism? Already, these arguments are being assiduously deployed by the Deutsche Bank, Volkswagen and other enterprises which are lobbying to avoid their own obligations to the past, to compensate former slave labourers.

"Why now?" is simple. Throughout the Cold War, Western governments were unwilling to deal with Germany's Nazi past. The fall of the Berlin Wall not only toppled the Soviet empire, it removed the justifications that had been used for half a century to deny justice.

It became the policy of the Allies in the late 1940s to turn a "blind eye to murder". Even while the Nuremberg trials were taking place there were pressures to focus on the Soviet Union as the enemy and to bring the war crimes prosecutions against Nazis to an end.

In the early 1950s, Bonn exacted a heavy price for supporting the West against Stalin. It secured the release from prison and the rehabilitation of business leaders such as Friedrich Flick and Alfred Krupp, as well as kid-glove treatment for those who had been convicted as leaders of the "Special Killing Squads" on the Eastern Front.

The CIA and MI6 saw no point in bringing Nazi murderers to trial; it was better to use them for operations against the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. Whether the recruitment of Nazis for Cold War duties was justified as "realpolitik" remains a matter of argument. But the fact that "de-Nazification" was abandoned so quickly had a devastating effect on the moral recovery of West Germany and the consequences are still with us. Not only did many murderers walk free, pro-Nazi historians retained their university chairs and tainted civil servants and bankers were restored to power. Opponents of the Hitler regime had to struggle for meagre compensation. In contrast, the widow of Reinhard Heydrich, the Nazi leader who organised the Wannsee conference which planned the Final Solution, received a large pension and lump sum.

Even Lord Shawcross, who as Sir Harley Shawcross had been Britain's main prosecutor at Nuremberg, seemed affected by the Cold War mood. After the political decision had been taken (against

So many Nazis were let off the hook in the Cold War

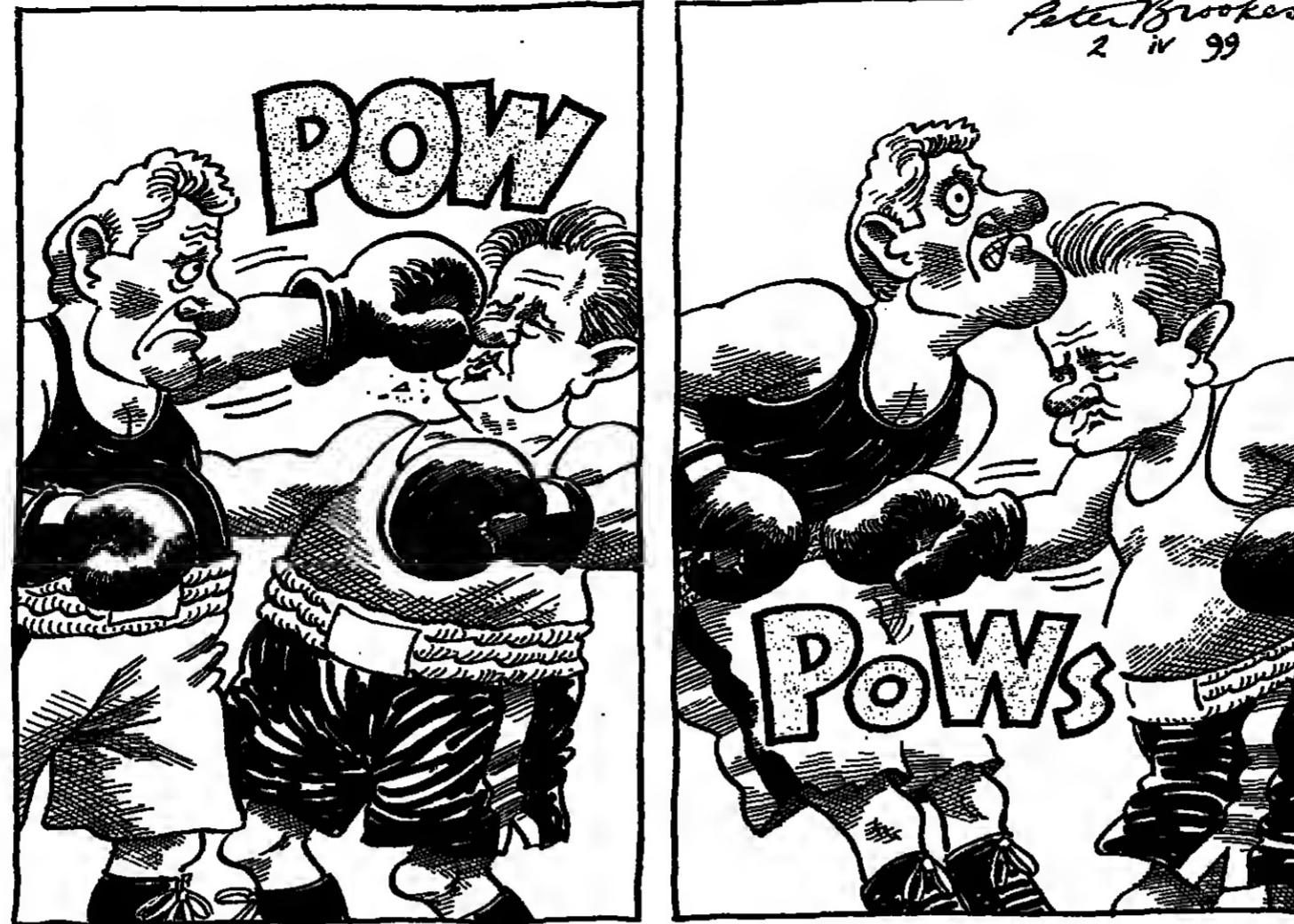
Germany's patchy restitution laws must be replaced by a willingness to meet the financial claims of surviving slave labourers and their families.

Third, survivors of the Holocaust are especially concerned to prevent, limit and punish the genocides of today. The ease with which leading Nazis were allowed to retain their freedom and money clearly indicated that crime does pay, provided it is on a sufficiently large scale. That must never happen again. The proposed permanent international war crimes court must be backed.

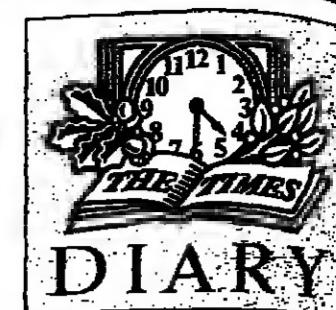
The unfolding tragedy in the Balkans only lends urgency to the need for justice which transcends borders. It may be facile to regard President Milosevic as a latter-day Hitler. There is a tendency to ignore the mischief of the countries which poured arms into Croatia in the early 1990s. The support given for anti-Slav movements by Germany is in line with its traditional geopolitics. But the provocations against Yugoslavia in no way excuse Serb brutalities. The atrocities of anti-Serb forces are equally inexcusable, though they have been on a smaller scale.

Those responsible for current mass murders must be brought to trial without regard to which side they are on. If this happens, human rights in Europe may come to be respected at last and the survivors of the Holocaust will have a measure of reassurance and hope.

comment@the-times.co.uk



THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999



Lost leader

THE widow of John Smith has joined other Labour grandees such as Lord Hattersley in boycotting a piece of virtual history. If *John Smith Had Lived*, being made for Channel 4 by that serial TV renegade, Roger Bolton, will try to fathom what Britain would now be like under Smith's leadership (Clause 4 intact, Margaret Beckett as Deputy PM and other scary scenarios), Baroness Smith of Gilmorehill has been kept informed but says "I don't want to discuss it".

Roy is more frank, saying that after he agreed to take part, Channel 4 moved the goalposts. "I thought I was being asked to present a tribute to John Smith, as did producers. But Channel 4 decided it should be a 'what if?' programme which would have been inappropriate. I am happy to criticise the Government, but not in the name of John Smith."

Channel 4 gives one of those spacy TV explanations: "Hattersley was involved at an early stage but these projects evolve."

THE self-propelling Lauren Booth, the PM's talented young sister-in-law, has a weakness for the mature man — in particular, Michael Parkinson (both below). "When he turned his crinkly smile on me I was reduced to a giggling wreck," she gushes. "I whimpered 'My God, you really are Parky.' It's that heady mix of Geff Boycott and Richard Burton."



■ PIERCE BROSNAN can blame his unsteady feet in the Alps to an inability to ski well. But Chris, his stepson, can have no excuse. The 25-year-old was outside the Met Bar last week demanding entrance. Brosnan Jr, who was banned from the nightclub Browns last October, was said to be "in gregarious mood". "He demanded to be let in," I am told. "There was a fracas and the doorman ended up with a bloody nose." I am told. Luckily for Chris, who did time for a drink-driving offence, the doorman did not go for the final solution. Chris confirms there was a row, but denies fistfights.

■ ALASTAIR CAMPBELL has had personally to reassure a Labour MP that he is not after his seat. Peter Pike, MP for Burnley, heard through the Westminster rumour-mill that he would be "palmed off with a peccary" to allow Campbell to run in the next general election (the wild claims started after a perceived increase in Campbell's political behaviour: talking to the Fabians, lunching in Shepherd's — that sort of thing).

"He told me not to worry," says Pike. "I think it is because he is a Burnley fan, but then so am I."



DAME Judi Dench is a hotter ticket on Broadway than Nicole Kidman. Advance sales for Amy's View, the English actress's show in New York, are outselling Mrs Cruise's The Blue Room. Dench's Oscar success is helping to attract record-breaking audiences.

■ CONFIRMATION of Geoffrey Boycott's Yorkshire-esque stewardship of his wallet is provided in a new biography, *Boys: The True Story*, out next year. "When he was touring the Far East with an International XI there was a debate about what to do if someone won a man of the match prize," says author Leo McKinstry, who wrote the Labour study, *Fit to Govern*.

"All the players wanted to share the money except for a certain someone. Don Shepherd, the off-spinner, was so mad that he grabbed him by the scruff, pinned him to the wall, said 'you're wrong, Boys', and threatened to do him permanent damage if he didn't agree." Geoffrey quickly agreed.

JASPER GERARD

'If our democracy is to prove itself as sophisticated as our weaponry, public support will be best served by honest dialogue'

Vanora Bennett

not just today's conflict but, again, the wars of the past. The case for intervention is not helped by exaggeration. Truth may be the first casualty of war, but a sense of proportion should not be next for the bodybag.

Hyperbole is sometimes understandable. The horror of the events unfolding in the Balkans is such that it can be genuinely hard for observers to find adequate words. Many of the 100,000 refugees who have fled Kosovo were stripped of papers by the Serbians marching them out. Jamie Shea, the Nato spokesman, called this "identity elimination". The comparison he made was from literature, seeing in it the same malign control over body and mind, present and past, life and death, exercised by the state in 1984. George Orwell's fictional protest against totalitarianism. He called it "an Orwellian scenario of attempting to

deprive a people and a culture of the sense of the past . . . on which it is based."

Reports of civilians being forcibly marched to the Albanian border on Tuesday drew another emotional comparison from Mr Shea, this time with the forced evacuation of Phnom Penh by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. The implications are breathtaking. The Cambodian evacuation led to more than a million deaths over the following four years. But the comparison, while bound to raise the emotional temperature, was an honest attempt to communicate the enormity of an event that our day-to-day experience cannot encompass. The despair of a UN worker, comparing the numbers flooding out of Kosovo to the much bigger refugee crisis in Africa — "Nothing like

has ever happened in Europe. It is a nightmare, a total nightmare" — may be exaggerated, but it also comes from the same struggle for comprehension.

M ore disingenuous perhaps are explicit comparisons between what is happening in Kosovo and Hitler's Final Solution. Germany's Defence Minister, Rudolf Schapping, said on Wednesday that there was "serious evidence of concentration camps being erected" in the province. The evidence came from refugees and intercepted military communications, he said. Such camps may indeed exist, but Herr Schapping's comment, as Nato extended airstrikes on Yugoslavia, seemed timed mainly to stiffen domestic resolve. What German could

reject the overwhelming moral imperative to save ethnic Albanians from meeting, at Mr Milosevic's hands, the same fate that the Nazis once imposed on Jews?

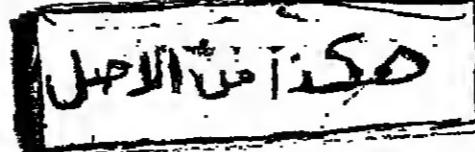
Perhaps more alarming is the ready use of the word "genocide". Losers in ethnic conflicts routinely cry genocide; third parties rarely do. In Rwanda, it was fully justified. But until the airstrikes began, genocide had been applied only with the greatest caution to anything but Hitler's policy of exterminating Europe's Jews. Yet those hearing the word being bandied about by Robin Cook and George Robertson could be forgiven for thinking the clock had turned back.

Genocide is not just another word for throwing people out of their homes or even murdering them. It means the deliberate

annihilation of a race". What little we know of Serbian actions in Kosovo suggests that Bel-

grade's determination to control the land is prompting Serbians to get rid of the ethnic Albanian majority by expelling or, in some cases, killing them. But, while the people of Kosovo are undoubtedly being terrorised, evidence has yet to emerge that Mr Milosevic is threatening Albanians with annihilation as a race. The less sure Nato leaders are of their aims, and of the extent of public support, the more extreme their language. This might be intended to give an air of certainty to Nato's confused policy, but its effect can be only cloud the issues. Today's conflict is serious enough to be dealt with on its own terms. If our democracy is to prove itself as sophisticated as our weaponry, public support will be best secured through sober, honest dialogue.

vanora.bennett@the-times.co.uk



A HOLDING AGREEMENT

Blair and Ahern outline the basis for an Ulster settlement

If peace could be delivered by presentation alone then Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern could provide Northern Ireland with decades of milk and honey. The two Prime Ministers conspired through manner to snatch a victory from what could otherwise be interpreted as at least a partial failure. Their declaration issued at Hillsborough Castle yesterday leaves numerous crucial questions still unanswered. It also relies on some extraordinary twists of language so that decommissioning is "not a precondition but an obligation" wrapped within a "collective act of reconciliation". Their document is, though, more than a nimble attempt to disguise a deadlock. It could represent the first draft of a deal that will revive the Good Friday agreement.

The strength of the document is that it starkly acknowledges the inter-relationship between the IRA unloading its arsenal and the British Government initiating a procedure that should end with an Ulster executive exercising devolved powers. For most of the past 12 months Sinn Féin have sought to deny that there is any linkage between these two issues. Mr Blair and Mr Ahern have made it very clear that without decommissioned arms there will be no ministerial authority. The device they have chosen to achieve this allows for all sides to make preparations for an executive that will not exist in proper form until after the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning reports that the IRA have taken certain weapons out of service.

This statement is not only right in principle but the only realistic option in practice. Neither David Trimble nor peace itself could survive a lesser settlement. The carefully constructed compromise outlined in the Anglo-Irish compact offers much to the nationalist community. If Sinn Féin are

seriously interested in the administration of Northern Ireland then they will now press their terrorist associates to accept this formula. Mr Blair has provided the republican movement with a breathing space in which to reach a fateful decision. Gerry Adams should make the most of it. If the IRA does indeed engage in a "collective act of reconciliation" then Ulster Unionists should swallow their reservations and allow Mr Trimble to start forming his executive. The First Minister, who has been obliged to concede so much, has drawn the right line in the sand and deserves the full support of his colleagues. The Prime Minister has, in effect, returned to the promises made to Protestant voters during last year's referendum. Mr Ahern has made his firmest public statement so far in favour of imminent decommissioning. The detail of this declaration will make it difficult for Sinn Féin to claim at a later stage that there is no need for the IRA to disarm completely. These are all important developments that reflect well on Mr Trimble's determination. Unionists would be wise to recognise their significance.

The Prime Ministers have bought some time and are evidently confident that they can reach a successful conclusion. They have cited, with enthusiasm, the enhanced spirit of co-operation that apparently pervaded this particular set of negotiations. It will take more than a benign atmosphere and skilful public relations, however, to ensure that the IRA, or the loyalist terror organisations, actually fulfil their responsibilities. The Good Friday agreement was the triumph of sheer hope soothed by strategic ambiguity. The next ten days will provide the real evidence as to whether all parties to that text are really willing to work exclusively within it.

GOOD FRIDAY

'Making peace by the blood of his Cross . . .' (Colossians 1.20)

A Good Friday in a week of bombings, massacres and ethnic cleansing is a stark reminder that the Christian Gospel is no philosophical theory or mere symbolic story. It is a gospel of salvation that has at its heart the execution by barbaric torture of a particular man in a particular place at a particular point in time. What we remember on Good Friday is all of a piece with Kosovo today – and with the judicial murders and tortures of every century of human history. Golgotha, the place of the skull, where nails smashed through the wrists and feet of Jesus, the teacher from Nazareth in Galilee, can stand for the skulls of every genocide. Betrayal by friends, self-preserving denial, making sport with prisoners, the mockery of crowds, spectators drawn to the spectacle, the soldiers doing their duty and dying for his clothes, a mother in agony and a knot of women helplessly looking on – it all happens time, and time, and time again.

Jesus was put to death in an occupied nation. His Crucifixion was the direct consequence of his challenge to the religious authorities of his day. It was no less a convenient way for a jittery Roman governor, nervous of trouble at Passover time, to get rid of a potential threat. The context of the Crucifixion of Jesus was a cocktail of religion and politics. Yet although this anchors it in history, we are compelled to look deeper to see why the Cross is the mark of Christian identity and the disclosure of what God is like.

The Gospels mark the ministry of Jesus with predictions of his passion. Sacrifice and suffering are at the very heart of who he is. As Dostoevsky affirmed, "Loving humility is a terrible force; it is the strongest of all things and there is nothing like it." Jesus proclaimed the coming of the kingdom, or rule, of God, a kingdom that was neither pursued nor established by the ways of violence and power. His kingdom, as He tells Pontius Pilate in St John's Gospel, is "not of this world". Only if it were would his servants fight.

And yet there is a fight, a fight of a cosmic order of which He is at the heart.

LOOSE DELIVERY

Wisden's editor has not proved his case on racism in cricket

The Wisden Cricketers' Almanack has long been regarded, rightly, as the bible of English cricket. Matthew Engel the current, extremely talented, editor of this august tome has developed a flair for mixing controversial sermons with the conventional statistics. It would, of course, be an appalling outrage to suggest that this esteemed national institution could be deliberately seeking publicity. Let it instead be said that Mr Engel might have acquired an attention maximisation strategy.

Most of Mr Engel's bouncers hit the right target. In the Notes by the Editor published yesterday he attacks the International Cricket Council for the miserable manner in which it has acted, or more accurately failed to act on the match-fixing scandal involving the Australian players Shane Warne and Mark Waugh. This conclusion is entirely legitimate. In his

Mr Engel relies more on anecdotes than solid information. In substantive terms the examples of what he describes as "informal segregation" in Essex and Yorkshire appear to consist of a sociology essay from the University of East London and the failure of the Yorkshire Post to report results fully from Pakistani-dominated local league matches. His observation that village teams fail to "welcome outsiders into the club's clannish atmosphere" is doubtless true but does not prove racism.

Sport cannot exist separately from a wider society. If there is prejudice in the public house then some of it will also occur in the pavilion. But on the whole British sport has been an enormously positive force for social integration. The comradeship borne of competition and the collective desire for victory are powerful forces for multi-racial harmony. Brian Lara has been universally admired this week for his

Serb history of stout resistance

From Mr Gordon Burnett

Sir, There is no prospect of stopping ethnic cleansing in Kosovo by negotiation alone. The Serbs will continue their cruel acts until they decide it is in their interest to stop.

The use of force is much more difficult, may well go wrong and is certain to be denounced by those who have no better alternative to offer. Force, when realistic negotiation has demonstrably failed, may not succeed, but it has a reasonable hope of doing so. The choice between force and everlasting negotiation depends on how much you really want to stop the atrocities in Kosovo.

We should be thankful that the Americans are prepared to act with determination in this crisis. We should be thankful, too, for Nato unity. Finally, we should congratulate our own Government on having taken the right decision and sticking to it.

Yours faithfully,
GORDON BURNETT,
14 Church Road,
Claygate, Surrey KT10 0JP.
April 1.

From Mr George Tintor

Sir, You contend that "Macedonia has done much to integrate its Albanian minority" (leading article, March 31). Yet the Albanians in Macedonia have fewer rights than those offered by Serbia to its Albanian minority.

The Albanians in Kosovo have had the same rights as every other ethnic group in Serbia, including the large Hungarian community in Vojvodina. Since 1989, however, when certain elements of Tito's 1974 Yugoslav Constitution were revoked, the Albanians themselves chose not to exercise their rights, preferring instead to wall about "Serb repression".

The tragic situation in Kosovo today is a consequence of the Albanians' absolute refusal to live in anything but an ethnically pure Greater Albania. The term "ethnic cleansing" was first used in Kosovo during the 1970s to describe the expulsion of Serbs from their homes by Albanians.

Ethnic Albanian extremists in Kosovo are responsible for the ongoing conflict. During the past year, the KLA has probably kidnapped and murdered more civilians than the Serbs. Only when Albanian extremism is defeated will Kosovo's inhabitants – Albanians, Serbs and others – be able to live in peace in a multi-ethnic country.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE TINTOR,
122 Leadenhall Street, EC3V 4QH.
March 31.

From Mr Jeremy Burnham

Sir, Ms Rosalie Huzzard (letter, March 31) suggests that we should have negotiated with Milosevic through the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Elsewhere in the same issue, your correspondent Janine di Giovanni reports allegations that Kosovars formerly working for the OSCE are being rounded up and shot by Serbian militias.

So much for jaw-jaw.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY BURNHAM,
30a Woodland Rise, N10 3UJ.
March 31.

From Mr Michael Crow

Sir, Some make much of the Serbian suffering at the hands of the Nazis (letters, March 25 and 29); others say that the Serbs have a history of strong resistance to aggression. These issues are then used as some sort of argument against Nato airstrikes. This seems to me to be rather selective.

Exactly how much suffering does one have to endure before receiving this waiver from the requirement to behave in a civilised manner? Do the Serbs have carte blanche to murder and torture their neighbours just because a different set of neighbours mistreated their parents and more distant ancestors?

Those who hope for sympathy for the Serbs for their history are deluding themselves. Any such sympathy has been forfeited by the events of the past few years.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
MICHAEL CROW,
13 Sleepy Hollow Drive,
Hamilton Parish,
CRO2 Bermuda.
mcrow@northrock.bm
April 1.

From James Tulloch

Sir, The problems in Kosovo date back to the battle of that name in 1389 between the Serbs and the Ottomans. The area has since been the thorn in the side of Europe, its conflict triggering the Great War in 1914.

Whether they are called the Black Hand or the KLA, ethnic Albanians want only autonomy. We want to return the Kosovo Albanians to Kosovo to live in peace there with the Serbs with whom they have been fighting for over half a millennium. Sweet dreams.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Need for new homes questioned

From Lord Ezra

Sir, The recent announcement by Mr Prescott (report, March 30; leading article, "Reopen and revise", March 31) that the estimated need for new homes was now reduced to 3.8 million by 2021 is a step in the right direction. The previous target of 4.4 million by 2016 was a matter of major controversy (leading article, "Without justification", March 27).

There remains the issue of where the new homes are to be built and there are still doubts about the extent to which this large (if now reduced) acreage to the housing stock is really necessary.

The Government has made it clear that it wishes the larger part of these new dwellings to be built in brownfield rather than in greenfield sites and has issued a Planning Policy Guidance Note (report, March 23), on which there is a consultation period. This is intended to help by setting new priorities for local authorities. There is, however, one aspect of the matter which has not been sufficiently covered: that is the large proportion of the existing housing stock which is below standard.

The English House Condition Survey for 1996, which is the latest to be published, shows that something like 3 million out of the 20 million dwellings in England are in a state of serious disrepair – and no doubt the situation is similar in Scotland and Wales. A determined effort to bring these dwellings up to standard would surely reduce the need for such a large quantity of newly-built homes.

Furthermore, there are nearly a million unoccupied dwellings. Bringing the bulk of these back into use

would also diminish the need for new building.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK EZRA
(President, National Home Improvement Council),
House of Lords.
March 31.

From Mr Jim Lancaster

Sir, The Planning Minister, Mr Richard Caborn, has announced that the Government will be strengthening the national Planning Policy Guidelines (PPGs) to encourage local authorities to favour brownfield as opposed to greenfield development.

This is a noble sentiment, but the PPGs are only guidelines. The Government appears to make no attempt to see that they are being followed, let alone enforced. Moreover, local authorities know very well that the Secretary of State for the Environment will only review an application under exceptional circumstances. In my experience local authorities can ignore both their own development plans and the national guidelines.

Mr Caborn's speech to the House on March 11, as reported in *Hansard*, was a robust argument for the Government's planning policies. But in his closing remarks he could only say that "I hope that planning authorities take account of what I have said this evening". A triumph of hope over experience?

Yours faithfully,
JIM LANCASTER,
Courtway House, Fairbank,
Kirby Lonsdale, Cumbria LA6 2BD.
jimly@onet.co.uk
March 30.

buy a miracle product at a miracle price. The salesmen go back with requirements to build an impossible system, and delays and failures follow with dreadful inevitability.

One should ask where in these processes are the qualified engineers? Almost none of those involved are members of professional organisations. Virtually nobody involved is qualified to do what they promise, or even to promise something sensible in the first place.

In nine months we shall all have the hindsight to wonder why we never required minimum qualifications for, for example, programmers. Let us hope that awareness of the need for professional qualifications will very rapidly become common sense.

When – and only when – that happens will it really be news to read about millions of pounds wasted on computers.

Yours faithfully,
HAROLD THIMBLEBY,
School of Computing Science,
Middlesex University,
Bounds Green Road, N11 2NQ.
harold@mdx.ac.uk
March 25.

driven to school or accompanied on foot are no more worried about stranger danger than are unaccompanied children. Furthermore, children as a group are considerably less anxious about stranger danger than are their parents.

While it is easy to make assertions, it is much harder to establish the facts about causal relationships in this area. Those who wish to encourage children to walk to school are right to emphasise the gains for them (eg, more exercise) and for the rest of us (eg, less traffic congestion), but they should not link their case to psychological effects for which I have seen no sound evidence.

Yours faithfully,
MARY SISSONS JOSHI,
Psychology Department,
Oxford Brookes University,
Gipsy Lane Campus,
Headington, Oxford OX3 0BP.
missions-joshi@brookes.ac.uk
March 22.

Thatcher and Pinochet

From Mr Javier Couso

Sir, Baroness Thatcher's support of former dictator Augusto Pinochet (report, March 27) is appalling. To express admiration for someone whose rule included torture, political assassination and exile because Britain benefited from Chile's support in 1982 surely reduces moral principles to sheer self-interest.

In a world in which military actions are often justified on humanitarian grounds, it seems contradictory to justify crimes against humanity when they are performed by governments that in the past chose to help you in a war against a third nation.

Baroness Thatcher's assertion that Pinochet is a democrat is unacceptable. The fact that Chile's democratic tradition made it impossible for Pinochet to manipulate a plebiscite in which he was defeated does not make him a democrat.

Yours faithfully,
JAVIER COUSO
(Constitutional Adviser to
Chilean Finance Minister, 1990-94),
3200 Smyth Road, Apartment 10-C,
Berkeley, Ca 94720.
cousou@uclink4.berkeley.edu

Science in Russia

From Professor Sir Graham Hills

Sir, Certainly, as Sir Arnold Wolfendale points out (letter, March 30), most of Russia's research institutes are in dire straits. The same is true for much of Eastern Europe.

Most of these research institutes were of an unmanageable size. Many employed several thousand scientists at the doctoral level, the justification of which was hard to fathom. All research is a loss leader, but the conspicuous expenditure on research in the Soviet Union, only possible in a command economy, could hardly be justified on a rational basis.

Russia has never been short of science and scientists but, like Britain, it is desperately short of technology and technologists. These are the only source of the wealth required to be ploughed back into industry if the country is ever to recover.

Regrettably, governments and government-funded institutes are good at growing scientists but hopeless at growing technologists. Until we all follow the examples of the US, Germany and others, which systematically cultivate technology and technologists, we, and particularly Russia, will remain in limbo.

Rethink on nature of God and Satan

From Father Aidan Baker

Sir, The recent attribution of femininity to God (letters, January 16 and 23) may lead us to consider whether there ought to be a similar attribution to another spirit – Satan.

For centuries the Devil has been unambiguously identified as male ... the Father of Lies, the Prince of Darkness, His Sonnic Majesty, etc. Should we see in this unfair discrimination over countless years? Is it only males that can tempt, do evil, work chauvinism?

As Easter approaches – the triumph of Christ over Satan – perhaps we should consider another aspect of the many-sided spirit of darkness, or would this be unchivalrous male chauvinism?

Yours sincerely,
AIDAN BAKER,
St Joseph's Retreat,
Highgate Hill, N19 5NE.
April 1.

Good Friday's meaning

From Mrs Peter Thistlethwaite

Sir, "Oh Mum! Hot Cross Bun Day!" I heard the young girl say as she tugged at her mother's sleeve whilst passing the bakery display. At least she was better informed than the girl who was said to have asked the jeweller for a silver cross with a little man on it, but neither understood the meaning of Good Friday.

Now that these delicious spiced buns seem to be sold all the year perhaps, to mark the significance, they could be decorated with a cross for Good Friday only.

Yours faithfully,
SARAH THISTLETHWAITE,
East Donyland Hall, Rowhedge,
Nr Colchester, Essex CO5 7JE.
April 1.

Women priests

From Mr Andrew Waude



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 1: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this morning arrived at Bristol Temple Meads Station and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Bristol (Mr Jay Timmarsh).

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness drove to Bristol Cathedral and were received by the Bishop of Bristol (the Right Reverend Barry Rogerson) and the Dean of Bristol (the Very Reverend Robert Grimley).

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh attended the Maundy Service at which Her Majesty distributed the Royal Maundy.

The Right Reverend Nigel McCullagh (Lord High Almoner) and the Reverend William Booth (Sub Almoner) were present.

The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeoman of the Guard were on duty.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness afterwards attended a Reception with members of the Cathedral and Diocesan Staff at the Chapter House.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh then presented the "Building a Better Bristol" Award to the Chairman of the Harbour-side Project (Mr Nicholas Hoof) before attending a Luncheon given by the Lord Mayor and the President of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce (Mr Douglas Claise) at the Mansion House.

The Queen this afternoon visited the Royal West of England

land Academy and was received by the President (Mr Peter Thursby).

Her Majesty met artists and members of the Academy as well as children from a local primary school.

The Queen later joined The Duke of Edinburgh at Cameron Balloons and was received by the Managing Director (Mr Don Cameron). His Royal Highness toured the factory and both Her Majesty and His Royal Highness met Mr Brian Jones and Mr Bertrand Piccard who circumnavigated the world in the balloon, Breitling Orbiter 3.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 1: The Duke of York this morning visited the East Riding of Yorkshire and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant (Mr Richard Marriot).

His Royal Highness later attended a church service at Holy Trinity Church, Kingston upon Hull.

Afterwards, The Duke of York visited Orchard Park and Hull North Enterprises.

This afternoon His Royal Highness visited the Anabaptist Community Care Centre.

The Duke of York later visited West Yorkshire and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant (Mr John Lyles).

His Royal Highness afterwards presented eight Duke of York Charter Awards.

Later, The Duke of York visited a demonstration of Putebol de Salao.

Premium Bonds

The £1 million prize in the Premium Bond draw for April was won with bond number 82SS 142886. The winner lives in Cheshire and has a bond holding of £5,000.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Charlemagne, King of the Franks and Holy Roman Emperor 801-14; Aix-la-Chapelle, 747; Giovanni Casanova, adventurer, Venice, 1725; Catherine Macaulay, historian, Wye, Kent, 1731; Hans Christian Andersen, story-teller, Odense, Denmark, 1805; William Holman Hunt, painter, member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, London, 1827; Air Marshal Sir Geoffrey Dhenin, 81; Captain Sir Richard Dobbs, former Lord-Lieutenant of County Antrim, 80; Sir Christopher Franks, civil servant, 65; Miss Catherine Gaskin, author, 70; Mr Raymond Gubay, concert promoter, 53; Sir Alan Guiness, CH, actor, 85; Viscount Hambleton, 69; Mr Barry Hills, racehorse trainer, 62; Sir Ian Hunter, impresario, 80; Miss Penelope Keith, actress, 59; Sir Peter Middleton, deputy chairman, Barclay's Bank, 65; the Marquess of Northampton, 53; Major-General C.J. Popham, 72; Mr A.C. Puddephatt, former general secretary, Liberty, 49; Mr M.G. Rizzello, sculptor and coin designer, 73; Sir Denis Rooke, OM, FRS, former chairman, British Gas, 75; Mr Ted Sheringham, footballer, 32; Lord Skelmersdale, 54; Miss Sue Townsend, writer, 53; Mr Denis Tuohy, broadcaster, 62; Professor Felix Weinberg, FRS, 71.

Appointment

Stephen Nash to be Ambassador to Latvia in succession to Mr Nicholas Jarrold who is moving to a new Diplomatic Service appointment.

Legal retirement

Judge Clive Taylor, QC, has retired from the Midland and Oxford Circuit Bench.



Some spectacular examples of the house plant *Hippeastrum*, or amaryllis, which are on show at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, this week. A *Hippeastrum* Celebration is being held until the end of April. The *Hippeastrum*, a native of South America, produces flowers up to 10in diameter

Your chance to get dug in this year

BY NORMAN HAMMOND
ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

UNPRECEDENTED opportunities to delve into Britain's past are being offered this summer. Although the number of research digs accepting volunteers has declined, more field schools and training excavations than ever are being run for the young and energetic of all ages.

Most of them are organised by universities, and directed by academic professional archaeologists, but anybody over the age of 16 can apply. The Council for British Archaeology publishes a Briefing listing the projects seeking people, and the council's Young Archaeologists' Club also organises activities for those under 16.

Among nearly 20 training digs on offer between the end of May and the end of September are the Roman Villa at Bignor in West Sussex, the Roman palace at Fishbourne only a few miles away, and the Roman city of Caerleon at Silchester near Reading.

Smaller settlements in the Romano-British countryside include Piddington near Northampton, and three sites in Wales, Castell Henllys in Pembrokeshire, New Pieces in Powys and Ardleddin near Welshpool.

Prehistoric sites are rare this year but Billtown on the Isle of Man includes Neolithic and Bronze Age remains, and in Upper Wharfedale in North Yorkshire a multi-period upland landscape is being studied. The Saxons will be dug up — literally, since a buried ground is included — at Sedgeford in Norfolk, and "King" Edward Balliol's castle (or palace) will be investigated at Botel Bailey in Welshpool.

Contact Council for British Archaeology, 111 Walmgate, York YO1 9WA; archaeology@compuserve.com.

LINKS

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<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/>
<http://www.compulink.co.uk/archaeology/digs.htm>
<http://archeocon.cla.ac.it/archosite>
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<http://archeocon.cla.ac.it/archosite>
<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/forum/camps.html>
<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/archabroad> (also at arch.abroad@ucl.ac.uk)

LINKS

WEBSITES
<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/>
[http://www.comp](http://www.compulink.co.uk/archaeology/digs.htm)

1999
ling,
OBITUARIES

Lieutenant-Colonel C. L. Boyle, OBE, Secretary of the Fauna Preservation Society, 1950-63, died on March 21 aged 100. He was born on March 9, 1899.

After a thirty year career as a Gunner in the Army, Leofric Boyle, as he was known to family and friends, devoted himself to wildlife conservation — a passion that had its origins in his Army career. Long voyages in trooperships in the days before soldiers were lifted from place to place by air were ideal for watching ocean birds. Service in India, with its rich fauna, stimulated a natural interest in animals of all sorts.

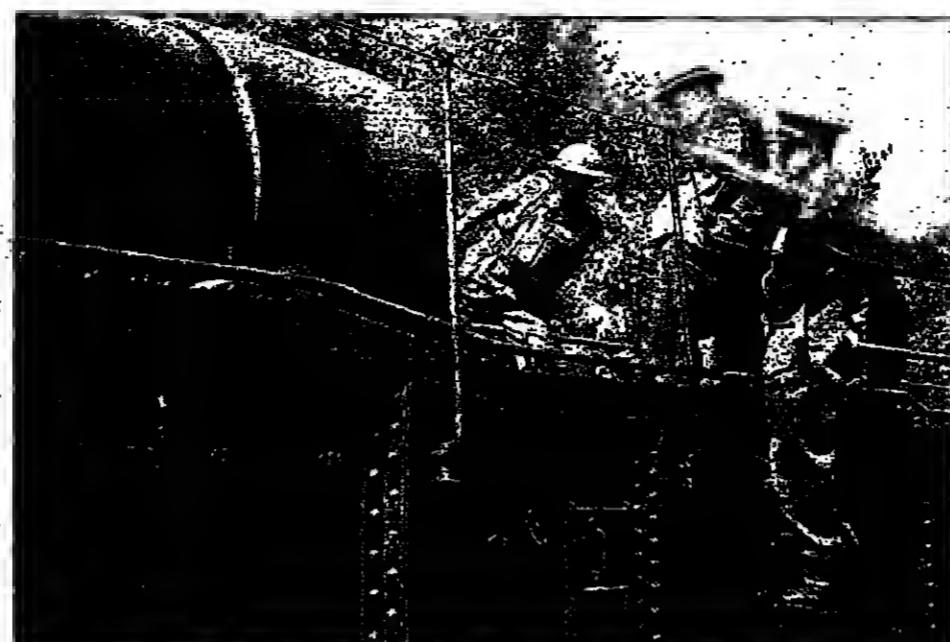
In the 1950s and 1960s Boyle was active in many campaigns to preserve wildlife. In the late 1950s he played a major role in Operation Noah, set up to try to save the thousands of animals endangered by the flooding caused by the construction of the Kariba Dam in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

Another notable campaign was the preservation of the rare Arabian oryx. In the early 1960s reports reached Boyle at the offices of the Fauna Preservation Society in London that the population of the species in the wild was teetering on the brink of extinction from the depredations of motorised raiding parties. He co-ordinated a rescue scheme, Operation Oryx, which was led in the



field by the chief game warden of Kenya, Ian Grimwood. After a great deal of difficulty four oryx were captured and taken to the zoo at Phoenix, Arizona, where a breeding herd was established. The Arabian oryx has since been successfully reintroduced into former haunts from stocks bred in captivity. Charles Leofric Boyle was

born in Trivandrum, South India, where his father was Professor of English at the Maharaja's College. His father died when he was three years old, and the family moved to South Brent in Devon. Later he lived in Winchester with his grandmother and, as a very small boy, attended the Winchester School for Girls. His later



Boyle showing Churchill over the so-called "Boche-Buster" in the summer of 1940, and the Arabian oryx (left), for which he campaigned in the 1960s

education was at King's School, Canterbury.

In 1917 he passed into the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich and was commissioned into the Royal Artillery. He subsequently served in Jamaica, India and Ireland.

In the early part of the Second World War he commanded No 11 Super Heavy Battery, a special artillery unit formed at the express command of Winston Churchill,

who was determined that Britain should be able to dominate the Channel with heavy guns in the aftermath of Dunkirk. Since it was impossible to produce guns of the large calibre he envisaged at short notice, the battery was formed with five 18-inch guns which had been built during the First World War. These could throw a 2,500lb shell 14 miles. The guns were also to be used to pound the Kent beaches in the event of a German landing.

Churchill took a keen personal interest in the project and Boyle was requested to show him over one of the guns, called the "Boche-Buster", which was mounted

on a railway line at Bishopsbourne near Canterbury. He also worked for a time in the Army's legal department at Woolwich on courts martial, work which appealed to him very much.

After the war he was an officer commanding troops on board ships repairing soldiers. During these voyages he was able to indulge one of his lifelong interests — watching seabirds at sea.

He was a keen bird photographer in the days before colour photography, and his photographs of the birds of

Kashmir, taken during his service in India, were exhibited in Britain and India in the 1930s and 1940s.

After retiring from the Army in 1949, he started a second career in wildlife conservation, as Secretary of the Fauna Preservation Society (now Fauna and Flora International) in 1950. This involved bringing the former Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire out of the doldrums into which it had sunk during the war years and renaming its somewhat stuffy-looking journal *Oryx*.

He attended international conferences and travelled to many parts of the world. He was responsible for introducing a Bill into Parliament for the Control of the Importation of Endangered Species. He was appointed OBE in 1963 for services to wildlife conservation and in 1973 received the Order of the Golden Ark from Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, one of the first group of people to receive it.

After retiring as Secretary of the Fauna Society in 1963, he served on the Wild Animals Committee of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and edited the RSPCA Book of British Mammals. He was a frequent proponent for wildlife causes in articles in *The Times* in the 1950s and 1960s.

He is survived by his four daughters of his first marriage, and by his second wife Valerie, to whom he was married for 48 years.

PROFESSOR GORDON STEWART

Professor Gordon Stewart, microbiologist, died of a brain tumour on February 27 aged 47. He was born on October 2, 1951.

GORDON STEWART made one of the most important discoveries in microbiology of the 1990s: that bacterial cells can talk to each other using a chemical "language".

This phenomenon, which became known as "quorum sensing", allows bacteria to control their behaviour in a population-dependent manner, and hints at a key stage in the evolution of multicellular organisms such as ourselves. The decoding of this bacterial language has enormous commercial and therapeutic implications, especially for the development of new drugs for the treatment and prevention of infections due to multi-resistant strains.

Stewart's career was based on the application of fundamental molecular genetic techniques to problems of relevance to food and pharmaceutical industries, such as engineering bacteria to emit light.

After graduating from St Andrews with a degree in Biochemistry in 1974, Gordon Sidney Anderson Birnie Stewart moved to Glaxo Research at Greenford in Essex. He then took a doctorate at Cambridge, and went on to do postdoctoral work on bacterial spores under the guidance of Dr David Ellar, punctuated by another short sojourn at Greenford.

In 1982 Fisons Pharmaceuticals of Loughborough seconded Stewart to the laboratory of Dr Jon Kuhn at the Technion in Haifa, Israel, where his love affair with bacterial bioluminescence began.

On returning to Britain in 1985, Stewart joined the department of food microbiology at Nottingham University, where he focused on the application of genetic engineering techniques to microbiological problems of industrial importance.

His success as a teacher and researcher quickly led to promotion, and he was awarded a chair in applied molecular biology (founded by Amersham International). Under his leadership, the department achieved the top rating of 5* in the government assessments of 1996.

Stewart's research into quorum sensing emerged from a close collaboration with Professors Barrie Bycroft, Paul Williams and George Salmon, and as it became more pharmaceutically oriented, he moved, in 1997, to the Nottingham school of pharmaceutical sciences.

During his terribly brief but outstanding career, he supervised more than 30 doctoral students, published more than 100 scientific papers and 10 patents, served on the editorial boards and committees of a number of journals and learned societies, and was in great demand as a speaker worldwide.

He found time to establish a company to develop his work on novel rapid methods for detecting and enumerating bacteria that cause disease and spoil food, and this research was recognised by the Society for General Microbiology, which awarded him the Colworth Prize in 1997.

Stewart's enthusiasm for science was inexhaustible, and he never tackled any problem half-heartedly: mountains were for climbing, not circumventing. He always made time to help his students, and guided many a young scientist embarking on the uncertainties of a research career. His laboratories were always full of visitors, from home and abroad, keen to be initiated into the dark secrets of bacterial bioluminescence.

Stewart is survived by his wife, Lesley, and his three sons.

MARJORIE HESSELL TILTMAN

Marjorie Hessel Tiltman, writer and journalist, died on February 26 aged 98. She was born on June 16, 1900.

A PROLIFIC writer and journalist, Marjorie Hessel Tiltman will be most widely remembered for her 1939 best-seller, *Quality Chase*, a novel set in the Midlands and based on the early life of her father, Sydney Hand.

Sydney Hand was the eldest of five children, and was born when her father, Sydney, began to achieve real success as a fine-arts dealer in Stourbridge. Despite being her father's favourite, she endured a turbulent childhood, largely because of his mercurial temperament and legendary rages. When she was six years old, he sold every item of stock and all the family furniture in order to finance a move — with attendant servants and a nanny for Marjorie and her siblings — to premises in New Street, Birmingham.

Not content with this move, Hand believed the only path to real wealth lay in London, and once again he sold everything, this time including the linen, and moved into Grafton Street. The family followed, and settled in Gates House, Hampstead.

On the outbreak of the First World War, Marjorie entered Trentham Girls School, where she spent four happy years. She subsequently went to the Triangle College of Journalism, and spent some time working with her father, who was not the easiest mentor. In 1918 she



joined *The Pictorial* magazine as a junior, but also did freelance work. Around that time she met Hugh Hessel Tiltman, a writer and keen liberal journalist, who wrote a series of successful adventure books, and then, in such works as *An Authentic Life* (1929) and *The Terror in Europe* (1930), espoused minority causes with great enthusiasm. They married in 1925 and were to travel extensively.

The couple spent a number of weeks touring in Russia, where they were made welcome by the Soviet authorities. Her husband's subsequent vivid reports led to his being castigated as a fellow-traveller by the British press and a traitor to the Revolution by the Soviets.

Together the couple bought a cottage in Coldwaltham in West Sussex, where she did most of her writing on country concerns for periodicals such as *Country Life* and *Good Housekeeping*. In 1937 her husband was

assigned to Shanghai by *The Manchester Guardian*. She went out to China to join him, staying with her sister Kathleen and her husband Victor Farmer in Tianjin. There she bought large quantities of jade porcelain, and in particular amassed a fine collection of oriental snuff bottles.

But she returned home after a few months to her cottage, where she continued her writing career. Her first novel, *Quality Chase*, was published in 1939, to wide acclaim. It was the *Evening Standard's* book of the year and was later dramatised on BBC radio. The success of this book prompted her to write a further 12 fiction and non-fiction titles, including the much-praised *Cottage Pie* (1940), *A Little Place in the Country* (1944) and *Goodbye to Lilley House* (1948).

Most of her journalism concerned rural matters, and she spent much time cultivating her garden at her cottage, where she lived happily during the war while her husband was in Washington.

When he was posted to Tokyo in 1951, she joined him.

He stayed on as Japan correspondent of *The Guardian* until 1963, but the destruction and poverty upset his wife, and she remained only a few months. Thereafter they lived until her death.

Her husband died in 1976. They had no children. She left £100,000 to PEN to establish a literary prize fund.

In 1937 her husband was

CANON BILL VANSTONE

Canon Bill Vanstone, priest and theologian, died on March 4 aged 75. He was born on May 9, 1923.

BILL VANSTONE was a great Church of England priest who devoted his gifts to pastoral care. In his efforts to serve his parishes he abandoned holidays, smoked the rankest of Captain cigarettes, concealed his extraordinary intellectual gifts from his parishioners and frustrated the efforts of Oxford colleges, bishops and friends to obtain his services and to care for his Vicarage door.

He gave 20 years to his first parish at Kirkholme, a new housing estate outside Rockdale, where he built up the church community and designed a new church building.

Afterwards he was briefly at another Lancashire housing estate at Hattersley, which had a grim link to the Moors murders.

However, by 1978

Vanstone argued against those who would have unchurched the Church of South India. He insisted that in thinking about church structures, meaning, not validity or utility, was crucial. "It does not follow that the Church separated from the episcopate ceases to be the Church... its life is still the life of the Spirit."

In all Vanstone's work, there were flashes of the radical within a scholarly Church of England outlook.

In Lancashire, Vanstone devoted himself to his parishioners, young or old, churchogoing or not. He inspired affection on the housing estate. Everyone knew they could turn to him. He never married. His parish was his family. His summer camps for boys were famous. He created a new parish organisation called Sigma to replace the Scout movement. His sermons always arose out of local events, many of which are described in his later writings.

Vanstone's pastoral experience fed him to be deeply committed to the belief that we worship a suffering God. In 1977 his *Love's Endeavour, Love's Expense*, which won the Collins Religious Book Prize, set out his convictions on the need for unlimited self-giving in all activities. As he wrote in the 1981 Doctrine Commission Report, "The Good God may be the sharer rather than the cause of suffering." He urged that neither pride nor indifference should prevent us from accepting each other.

Vanstone was a man of complete integrity, but as the task in housing estates became more intractable and his own health more uncertain, he could respond negatively to fresh approaches to worship and Christian life.

On the Manchester Diocesan Liturgical Committee he urged con-

stant adherence to the 1662

In an interview with Ed Murrow in 1961, Ebtehaj spoke critically of economic policy and planning in Iran. He openly attacked Washington for giving economic and military support to the Shah, who offered him a choice of heading the National Iranian Oil Company or the Plan Organisation. Ebtehaj advocated a programme of international assistance with rules applying equally to all nations. When he returned to Tehran he was arrested and jailed on trumped-up charges relating to the construction of the Dez Dam. However, after seven months, international protests led the public prosecutor to offer his release on bail of \$140 million. Ebtehaj refused to accept, and remained in jail until the bail was dropped.

After the Revolution, he left Iran for Cannes, where he lived with Mrs Azar Ebtehaj for a few years before she came to London, where he



disrupted the flow of oil revenues. Within a few days of his return to Tehran in 1954, Ebtehaj roared at the top of his voice: "Iran does not need military hardware; Iran needs economic development." With those words he spurned the last vestige of the Shah's support. A few days later, authority for the Plan Organisation was transferred to the office of the Prime Minister.

Ebtehaj then set out to establish the Iranian Bank, which thrived from January 1960 until it was nationalised by the Revolutionary Government in 1979.

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THE TIMES TODAY

FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999

NEWS

US outrage at PoW show trial

■ Three bruised and battered American soldiers, snatched by Yugoslav troops across the border from Kosovo, are to appear at a show trial in Belgrade today.

The sight of the three men on Yugoslav state television looking shocked and haggard caused outrage across the United States and President Clinton said that President Milosevic would be held personally responsible for their safety. He said: "There was absolutely no basis for them to be taken and there is no basis for them to be held".
..... Pages 1, 4-11

British lorries smuggle refugees

■ British lorry drivers are being used by gangs to smuggle Kosovar refugees across the Channel every night. Many drivers are the unwitting victims of an operation that involves slipping asylum-seekers into their lorries at Channel ports..... Page 8

Easter sunshine

Sun-worshippers fleeing the cities for Easter encountered massive traffic congestion, with the consolation that they are likely to enjoy near-record temperatures. Page 1

War criminal jailed

Anthony Sawoniuk was given two life sentences at the Old Bailey after becoming the only person to be convicted in a British court of war crimes..... Page 13

Disruptive children

Staff from a high-security hospital are training teachers to deal with disruptive children as young as three..... Page 17

Education 'deceit'

A union leader launched a sizzling attack on Labour's stewardship of the education service yesterday, accusing ministers of "desertion"..... Page 12

Cocaine sentence

The wife of former European showjumping champion Paddy McMahon was starting a 12-year jail sentence after being convicted of involvement in a £2 million cocaine-smuggling racket..... Page 13

Murder charge

The Briton charged with murdering his children's nanny and lover in the US is alleged to have beaten her to death with a wrench when she told him she wanted to end their relationship..... Page 13

Sterling value of Maundy money

■ The Royal Mint is seeking ways to keep the Queen's Maundy money in sterling should Britain join the euro. As the Queen distributed the specially-minted coins to 146 pensioners in Bristol, Mint officials said they planned to protect the custom of paying the money in 1p, 2p, 3p and 4p pieces should the pound be abolished..... Page 20



Boys from Christ Church Kids' Club, Colchester, look at a model of a Stealth bomber in the War Museum at Duxford, Cambridgeshire

BUSINESS

Ashcroft returns: Michael Ashcroft, the Conservative Party benefactor, returned to the centre stage in the City with a £282 million takeover bid..... Page 29

Under fire: Gordon Brown's tax cutting credentials came under fresh attack after the Treasury Select Committee claimed that the overall tax burden "will increase during the coming year"..... Page 29

BP bonanza: BP Amoco's \$26.8 billion takeover of Atlantic Richfield will trigger million dollar payoffs for executives but the loss of more than 2,000 oil jobs..... Page 29

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 34.7 to 6,330.0. The pound fell .88 cents to 6,050. The pound fell .48p to 67.39p against the euro. The pound index fell to 102.2 from 102.9..... Page 32

SPORTS

Tennis: The Great Britain team of Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski begin their great adventure as they set off to defeat the United States in the centenary Davis Cup..... Page 56

Cricket: Andrew Flintoff looked an inspired choice for the World Cup after he smashed 112 from 67 balls. Unfortunately, he struck the runs against his own bowlers..... Page 56

Football: Kevin Keegan moved to soothe fears that England's bleak prospects of qualifying automatically for the European Championships might force him to abandon his part-time coach role..... Page 38

Rowing: Oxford still look favourites for tomorrow's University Boat Race, even though Cambridge had a cleaner and more controlled look than earlier in the week..... Page 40

ENTERTAINMENT

Food of love: "What can music do, what has it ever done, to cure a famine, curb a tyrant, or reverse a terrible wrong?" Richard Morrison puts forward an answer..... Page 37

Pop 1: David Sinclair reviews Orbital, Dawn of the Replicants and the rest of the week's new albums; plus jazz albums, and singer Sheila Chandra, South London-born "world citizen"..... Page 38

Pop 2: Caitlin Moran ponders the curious case of the ever-present pop miracle; plus the reformed bad boys of Electronic, and a band called Brian..... Page 39

Gingerbread kids: Welsh National Opera's gruesome version of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* travels to Sadler's Wells and terrifies Rodney Milnes..... Page 40

OPINION

Jane Shilling: "It is hard to see how the headscarf got itself such a bad reputation. The word summons up visions of redoubtable females, their heads wrapped in a knotted length of material"..... Page 22

Loose delivery: The woman who has become a keen supporter of a second division football club, at the age of 74..... Page 23

ROSEMARY RIGHTER: Mr Milosevic has plunged NATO into what may be a long and difficult campaign; resolution will be needed to build the peace. The foundations must be laid now..... Page 24

OBITUARIES

M. Pinto-Duschinsky: Those responsible for current mass murders must be brought to trial without regard to which side they are on. If this happens human rights in Europe may come to be respected..... Page 24

VANORA BENNETT: If our democracy is to prove as sophisticated as our weaponry, public support will be best served by honest dialogue..... Page 24



Tomorrow in The Saturday Times Ay Carumba!

meg@
voted the best
British Newspaper Awards
Supplement of the Year

SCIENCE

Off-course: For students with weak A-level results, it has never been easier to get into university. But higher education can harm job prospects..... Page 47

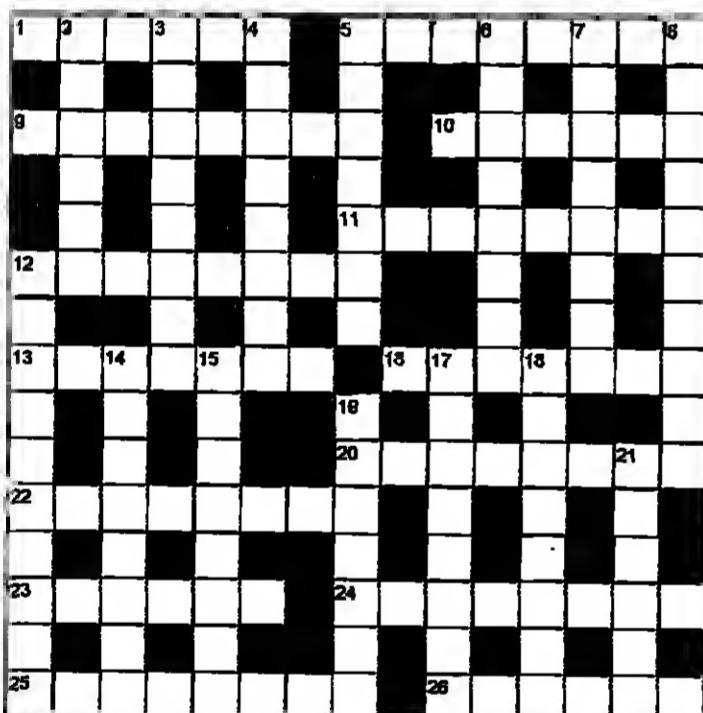
TRAVEL

The map of Canada changed when the territory of Nunavut became part of the federation. We are happy that Canada has recognised Inuit can govern themselves, as they did before. Now is the time for Inuit groups in other parts of Canada to move forward on the same path
—Montreal Gazette

Ethnic cleansing in Kosovo; new housing stock; could the Devil be female; Good Friday; women priests; computer chaos; the school run; Thatcher and Pinochet; science in Russia; wedding gifts..... Page 25

1, 5, 12, 24, 26, 38, Bonus: 11

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,067



Solution to Puzzle No 21,066



ACROSS
1 From China it developed, not new as martial art (3,3).
5 Deliberate about maiden coming to a ball with aromatic scent (8).
9 Safe to criticise children's play (5,3).
10 Team of five write little (6).
11 Giving one's notice may be very risky (3).
12 He was brought to book for his woeful predictions (3).
13 Fool taken in by wizard's manipulation (7).
16 Had dreadfully died after sack of ancient city (7).
20 Party served with prime fillet (8).
22 Old Jew depressed, expected to embrace another religion (8).
23 Natural blend of tea offered by hotel (6).
24 Give approval to girl I take out (8).
25 Subtlety of type of creed followed by one saint after another (8).
26 Engage a bishop to lead service (6).

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO 21,066

WEATHER INFORMATION

Last night and Weather conditions
All regions All night 10°C Max 10°C
UK Weather - All regions 0320 401 4740
Inside 0234 401 7260
PT23 and Link Roads 0234 401 7267
Met Office 0234 401 7268
Continental Europe 0234 401 7269
Channel crossings 0234 401 7270
Planes to Heathrow & Gatwick airports 0234 407 3001

Weather by Fax

Europe Country 0120 411 2120
Vice Country 0120 411 2121
Water 0120 411 2122 London 0120 412 2424
East Anglia 0120 411 2123 National Seafre 0120 411 2124
Fjords 0120 411 2125 Phoebe 0120 411 2127
Scotland 0120 411 2126
Marine Services 0120 411 2128

AA Car Reports by fax

Now and used car reports from the AA more of 195 cars 0326 410 2990
Data from your fax handset you may have to set to poll receive mode
AA Roadside Emergency Assistance 0821 800 000
Calls are charged at 10p per minute or 10p a call.

FORECAST

■ General: It will remain unsettled then yesterday with temperatures not quite as high, but quite mild as sunny spells develop. Wind light, SE to SW, Max 16C (61F). ■ Borders, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness, Firth of Forth, Orkney, Shetland: mist and fog along the coastal fringes. Warm sunny spells developing inland. Wind moderate, SE Max 15C (59F) but cooler on the coast.
■ SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands: misty with a few sunny spells, but a few showers breaking out. Wind moderate, SE Max 15C (59F).
■ Argyle, NW Scotland: warm and mainly sunny with a few sunny spells. Wind moderate, SE Max 14C (57F).
■ N Ireland: early showers gradually dying out to leave warm sunny spells by this afternoon. Wind moderate, S to SE Max 15C (59F).
■ London, S England, Midlands: warm, sunny spells, some sharp showers. Wind light, SE to Max 17C (63F).
■ E England, Central N & NE England: mist and fog towards the coast. Bright intervals with a mix of sunny spells and the odd shower. Wind moderate, SE Max 16C (61F).
■ Channel Islands, SW England, South Wales: the odd shower this morning but spells of warm sunshine developing. Wind light, SW, Max 16C (61F).
■ N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Cumbria: early showers will spread into southwest England, Wales and Northern Ireland before morning.

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■ Republic of Ireland: scattered showers at first, then sunny intervals, clouding over later. Wind light, S to mostly moderate. Max temp 15C (59F).
■ Connacht, S Dublin: will be warm, but rather unsettled with sunny spells and showers. Easter Sunday may start a little cloudy but the east will become warm and sunny. The west will also be warm but will stay more cloudy with rain expected in western Scotland and Northern Ireland.

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■ N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Cumbria: early showers will spread into southwest England, Wales and Northern Ireland before morning.

■ Republic of Ireland: scattered showers at first, then sunny intervals, clouding over later. Wind light, S to mostly moderate. Max temp 15C (59F).
■ Connacht, S Dublin: will be warm, but rather unsettled with sunny spells and showers. Easter Sunday may start a little cloudy but the east will become warm and sunny. The west will also be warm but will stay more cloudy with rain expected in western Scotland and Northern Ireland.

■ London, S England, Midlands: warm, sunny spells, some sharp showers. Wind light, SE to Max 17C (63F).
■ E England, Central N & NE England: mist and fog towards the coast. Bright intervals with a mix of sunny spells and the odd shower. Wind moderate, SE Max 16C (61F).
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BUSINESS • ARTS • MEDIA • SPORT • TELEVISION

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

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Entrepreneur confounds City institutions with complicated offer

Ashcroft bids £200m for CSG

BY PAUL DURMAN

MICHAEL ASHCROFT, one of the great wheeler-dealer entrepreneurs of the 1980s and now a leading bankroller of the Conservative Party, strode back onto the City stage yesterday with a £200 million-plus offer for the embattled Corporate Services Group.

The tycoon, who gave £1 million to help William Hague's attempts to restore the finance of the Tory party, waded into the row at CSG with an offer that has confounded three City institutions seeking their own conclusion to the troubles at the employment and training group.

Mr Ashcroft's offer is one of the more complicated offers that shareholders will have had to deal with. He plans to merge two of his companies

and then to make an offer worth anything from £206 million to £282 million for CSG which has issued two profits warnings in the past month.

A condition of the offer is that CSG's board should remain unchanged — even though Schroders, Mercury Asset Management and M&G are seeking to force the removal of Jeffrey Fowler, its chairman, and four other directors.

Mr Fowler is understood to share Mr Ashcroft's close ties to the Tory party. However, it is believed that until recently Mr Ashcroft had not seen Mr Fowler for more than ten years.

Tim Holland-Bosworth, a CSG director, said Mr Ashcroft "clearly thinks more highly of management than the

dissident institutional shareholders", whose action he said was badly damaging for the group's business.

However, one of CSG's critics said: "If this is a white knight, they must be colour blind."

CSG strongly urged its shareholders to take no action, and to wait for the offer document from "New Carlisle" — the £464 million company to be formed by the all-share merger of Carlisle Group, Mr Ashcroft's Aim-listed recruitment and cleaning business, and BHI Corporation, his Nas-

daq-listed facilities management and financial services group.

Much of the complexity of the offer stems from an "additional cash" component, which could be financed by up to £80 million of Mr Ashcroft's shares in Tyco International, the US conglomerate to which he sold his ADT security services business for £3.5 billion.

Depending on fluctuations in Tyco's share price, Mr Ashcroft's advisers at Rees Brothers suggest the New Carlisle offer will be worth between 87.7p and 120p for each share in CSG. CSG's shares climbed from 73.4p to 94.4p yesterday — still far below last year's peak of 261p.

One investor said: "Don't ask me to explain the bid. It's difficult to establish the value

of a bid from a vehicle that has yet to be created."

Mr Ashcroft, a veteran of dozens of deals, is said to regard his proposal as "very simple", despite the uncertainty over CSG's profitability. Estimates of last year's profits have been cut from £55 million to £20 million but Mr Ashcroft is backing his judgment and experience of running service businesses.

However, New Carlisle's offer would be conditional on CSG making underlying profits of at least £19 million and receiving an unqualified report from its auditors.

The institutions are pressing ahead with their plans to remove Mr Fowler and the other directors, since they have no confidence in the current board's ability to assess the offer.

Chancellor under fire over tax burden

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN's tax-cutting credentials came under fresh attack yesterday after the influential Treasury Select Committee claimed that the overall tax burden "will increase during the coming year".

The Labour-dominated committee also rebuked the Chancellor for failing properly to clarify his tax burden calculations and for not spelling out how he had achieved an £18 billion shortfall in public spending.

Opposition politicians im-

mediately seized on the committee's surprisingly critical conclusions as evidence that the Chancellor had played fast and loose with his Budget arithmetic.

Francis Maude, Shadow Chancellor, said: "It is a damning indictment of Labour's lack of openness. This is the most dishonest Budget in history."

The Committee's 1999 Budget Report, however, stopped short of arguing Mr Brown's tax claims were completely inaccurate. The report said that the this year's Budget measures would reduce tax, as Mr Brown has argued, but by less than previously announced measures would increase the overall tax burden.

The report also did not endorse the chief opposition claim that Mr Brown had deliberately manipulated the accountancy treatment of certain taxes and benefits in order to make his tax-cutting claims.

The Treasury has counted the abolition of mortgage rate relief (Miras), which will cost homeowners £2.75 billion a year, as a rise in public spending even though in opposition Mr Brown treated the reduction in the rate of Miras as a tax rise.

The Chancellor has also counted the introduction of the Working Families' Tax Credit — worth £1.5 billion to eligible families — as a tax cut, despite the Office for National Statistics insisting the credit should instead be treated as a rise in public spending.

If these two accountancy conventions were reversed, opposition politicians have calculated that taxes would rise by £100 million as a direct result of this year's Budget.

However, the Committee said it saw "no objection" to the Chancellor's measure of taxes and social spending but added that Mr Brown should have better spelt out the differences.

FTSE scales record

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE Stock Market scaled an all-time high yesterday, bolstered by a flood of fresh investor money and some reassuring economic data.

In the last session before the Easter holiday, the FTSE 100 index for once broke with a weak Wall Street to climb more than 100 points to peak at 6,399.1 during the day. However, the market failed to hold the majority of its gains and closed up 34.7 at 6,330.0, just short of its previous record closing high. Analysts said that end-of-financial-year investment helped underpin the rise.

The March Confederation of British Industry distributive trades survey showed retailers enjoyed their best month since September. The March purchasing manufacturers' index recorded its best month since last May.



Sir John Browne, BP chief executive, described the deal as a "compelling strategic fit of quality assets"

C&W sues MCI over Internet sale

BY RAYMOND SNOODY
MEDIA EDITOR

CABLE & WIRELESS, the international telecommunications group, yesterday launched a multi-million dollar lawsuit against MCI WorldCom over the \$1.75 billion (£1 billion) sale of MCI's Internet assets last year.

C&W, in a legal action filed in the Delaware Federal Court, accuses MCI of numerous breaches of the sale agree-

ment and is seeking an, as yet, unspecified amount in damages and compensation.

The UK group says MCI WorldCom broke its agreement by failing effectively to transfer MCI's Internet customer base or its Internet staff; by impeding its ability to operate the Internet business; and by targeting former MCI Internet customers for marketing purposes.

C&W says that, as a result of the alleged breaches, it has

lost Internet customers, revenue and marketing opportunities. There have also been significant recruitment costs for replacing staff that MCI WorldCom failed to transfer.

The suit also accuses MCI WorldCom of damaging C&W's reputation in the minds of American customers.

C&W's share price fell by 22p to 75.2p on news of the legal action.

Denny Matteucci, chief executive of Cable & Wireless USA,

said yesterday the company would do whatever it took to protect customers and services. That includes the costly measures we've had to take due to MCI WorldCom's non-performance under the purchase agreement and our resolve to pursue litigation to a successful agreement," he said.

The lawsuit is clearly the opening shot in a tough final round of negotiations to set a final valuation on the MCI Internet deal. The \$1.75 billion

deal was always subject to "post-closing adjustments" which in this case could be considerable.

The dispute, however, is unlikely to threaten the continuation of the deal, which is at the centre of C&W's plan to expand using the Internet.

MCI had to dispose of the Internet business as a regulatory quid pro quo for merging with WorldCom.

MCI WorldCom yesterday declined to comment.

Business Today

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Stock market: FTSE fails to hold onto lead 32
Unit trusts: 35
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Minimum wage
Cassandras left out of court
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FTSE 100: 5,020.00 (-54.7)
Yield: 2.44%
FTSE All Share: 2,805.22 (+11.43)
Nikkei: 16,825.58 (+490.94)
New York:
Dow Jones: 9,815.58 (+25.42)*
S&P Composite: 1,286.37 (+3.50)*

Federal Funds: 6.05%*
Long bond: 6.07%*
Yield: 6.07%*

London Interbank:
3-month interbank: 5.4%*
12-month gilt: 116.98 (117.34)

New York:
\$: 1.6067* (1.6102)
£: 1.5865 (1.6133)
€: 1.4965 (1.4948)
\$Y: 2.0020 (2.0020)
¥: 181.84 (191.18)
S Index: 102.2 (102.9)

London: 1.6780* (1.6780)
\$F: 1.4885 (1.4882)
¥: 120.57 (120.53)
\$ Index: 108.4 (108.2)

Tokyo close: Yen 118.55

London clearances: 5,650 (5,724.65)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates page 30

BP Amoco bonanza for Arco chiefs

BY CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

FIVE EXECUTIVE directors of Atlantic Richfield (Arco) will share \$17 million (£10 million) in severance payments after delivering the debt-burdened US oil company to BP Amoco in a \$26.8 billion deal, confirmed yesterday.

The takeover of Arco will create a \$190 billion behemoth but will lead to the loss of 2,000 jobs at the American company, of which 15-20 per cent will be in Alaska, where BP and Arco are already the number one and number two oil producers.

The bulk of the jobs will go at Arco's head office in Los Angeles and its downstream operations on the US West Coast.

Some 200 jobs will go at Arco's UK headquarters in Guildford, Surrey.

Sir John Browne, BP's chief executive, described the takeover, which will propel BP into second position in worldwide oil and gas production, as a "compelling strategic and geographic fit of quality assets".

BP and Arco combined will be the largest oil producer in the US and in the UK. Worldwide, the enlarged BP will pump 4 million barrels of oil and gas per day (bpd), ahead of Shell's 3.7 million bpd but below Exxon-Mobil's 4.3 million bpd. Arco also brings with it a vast gasfield in Indonesia, Tangguh, with 8 trillion cubic feet in reserves.

Sir John promised that the deal would generate \$1 billion in cost-savings with 70 per cent coming from upstream businesses, including a \$200 million saving in Alaska.

where the two companies are struggling to reverse declining oil outputs. In Alaska, BP hopes to cut the cost of lifting a barrel of oil by 80 cents.

A restructuring charge of \$1 billion will affect BP's accounts this year to pay for redundancies and taxes to the UK Treasury.

BP is forced to pay \$400 million in Stamp Duty Reserve Tax as a result of changes in the last Finance Bill which closed a loophole used in the BP Amoco merger.

The initial approach came from Mike Bowlin, Arco's chief executive, who contacted Sir John in January. According to Sir John, "he effectively offered us the company".

Sir John said that the Arco board would not be offered jobs at BP Amoco. However, recent Arco filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission reveal change of control provisions that will award the directors three times their salary plus the highest bonus paid over the past three years, plus a pro rata portion of the current year bonus target. In the case of Mr Bowlin, the severance package could be worth more than \$6.8 million.

BP's exploration director, Dick Oliver was rushed to Alaska at the beginning of the week for talks with the state government, where BP faces tough negotiations over its potential domination of the industry. Sir John indicated that disposals totalling \$3 billion would be on the cards.

Commentary, page 31

Ford to cut 680 jobs at UK plants

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

FORD is to cut 680 jobs across its UK motor factories to make them more competitive with international rivals. The news comes a day after thousands of jobs were saved at Rover's Longbridge plant.

The US group is calling for 220 redundancies from the hourly-paid staff at each of its biggest plants, Halewood and Dagenham. Other job cuts will be from salaried staff. All will be voluntary, Ford said.

Dagenham, which exports nearly half the Fiestas it builds, has been on a four-day week since October because of poor worldwide markets. Ford employs 26,800 people in the UK and last implemented redundancies two years ago, when L200 posts went.

Tony Woodley, Transport & General Workers' Union car negotiator, said: "If the yearly call continues without something being done to create new jobs or at least maintain jobs, there will be no one left."

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BRIGHT SPOTAGE

Teletubbies director on awards shortlist

THE woman who gave the world the Teletubbies is among the five candidates on the shortlist for the Businesswoman of the Year Award.

Anne Wood, 61-year-old founder and creative director of Ragdoll Productions, the independent producer of the hit toddlers' television programme, has been shortlisted alongside other executives working in retailing, recruitment, IT and ship maintenance.

Rivaling her for the award sponsored by Veuve Clicquot and won last year by Marjorie Scardino, chief executive of Pearson, are:

Linda Bennett, the owner and managing director of LK Bennett, a footwear and clothing chain started in Wimbleton in 1990;

Lorna Moran, the founding chief executive of the quoted recruitment company Northern Recruitment, based in Newcastle upon Tyne;

Christiane Wuillamie, a French citizen of Vietnamese descent now living in the UK, who is chief executive of CWB Systems Services, an IT company with offices in the City of London and New York;

Yvonne Mason, chairwoman and founder of Fender Care, based in Seething, Norfolk, which maintains ship fenders.

The announcement of the winner will be on April 29.



Celebrating their selection to the Businesswoman of the Year shortlist are, from left, Linda Bennett, Christiane Wuillamie, Yvonne Mason and Anne Wood

Swallow rejects fresh plan for management buyout

SWALLOW GROUP yesterday rejected a last-ditch attempt by Alchemy Partners, the venture capitalist, to rescue a management buyout of its two breweries and a package of tenanted pubs.

Peter Catesby, chief executive of Swallow, said the fresh proposals were "totally unacceptable" and would not have offered shareholders adequate value for the assets".

He added: "We do not pro-

pose to pursue further discussions with Alchemy on this basis."

He was responding to a letter from Alchemy to Swallow on Wednesday night outlining three options for reviving the negotiations. Talks collapsed last week, prompting the resignation of Sir Paul Nicholson, the Swallow chairman.

This compares with a book value of £144.7 million, of which the pubs account for £100.4 million. Mr Catesby said: "It's an awful shame, be-

cause there is an economically sensible solution which would have saved a lot of jobs."

A source close to Alchemy went further in its criticism of Swallow: "They couldn't organise the proverbial in a brewery, which is probably why they're closing them!"

Mr Moulton, managing partner of Alchemy, said he was disappointed with the Swallow board's reaction and furious at learning of its response by press release. "They didn't bother to contact us," he said. "It's an awful shame, be-

Cammell Laird shuts shipyard

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

CAMMELL LAIRD'S South Shields shipyard closed yesterday after the engineering group decided that it needed too much money for repairs and renovation.

The closure — which took immediate effect — came after

a review of the group's North-East operations.

Brett Martin, the deputy chief executive, said: "South Shields suffers from limited facilities and environmental restrictions and would require several million pounds of remedial work on both the dry docks and the quayside jetties.

Cammell Laird is to transfer all South Shields' apprentices and to try to find work for

its other workers. The closure of South Shields came the day after the group won a £10 million order to convert a grain ship into a hospital ship. That work will be done at its Tyne-side yard. Cammell Laird began reviewing its North-East sites after buying ALB, the docks company, last year.

Engineer studies US approach

BY ADAM JONES

POWERSCREEN International, the Northern Ireland engineer whose shares have leapt 42 per cent since it announced on Wednesday that it is a takeover target, is mulling over a bid proposal from a US buyer.

Although Powerscreen refused to comment in detail, it is thought that its suitor may be John Deere, a tractormaker that has already bought assets from Powerscreen. Industry sources say the suitor is not a management buyout team.

Powerscreen is in play after accounting irregularities led to the collapse of its share price last year. After the irregularities, which are the subject of a Serious Fraud Office investigation, the top three executives were replaced and assets were sold to reduce debt.

The Powerscreen board has received a cash proposal that it sees as serious. The approach is not thought to involve Sean Quinn, a businessman based in Northern Ireland whose business is Powerscreen's biggest single shareholder. Mr Quinn is a friend of Shay McKeown, Powerscreen's former chief executive, who left after the irregularities were found.

Yahoo! in \$5.7bn purchase

FROM ANDREW BUTCHER
IN NEW YORK

YAHOO!, the Internet search engine, moved to expand its reach yesterday with the \$5.7 billion (£3.5 billion) purchase of Broadcast.com.

The purchase of the Internet audio and video broadcaster is an attempt by Yahoo! to become a one-stop-site for users of the Web. Broadcast.com recently aired a live Webcast of a Victoria's Secret lingerie show, while it also broadcasts sport, press conferences, news and music.

Broadcast.com shareholders will be paid with shares in Yahoo!. Although the deal values Broadcast.com at \$5.7 billion, the company has not made a profit since it was founded in 1995. Yahoo! will pay \$4.7 billion for the company's common stock and a further \$900 million for outstanding options.

The merger is the second this year by Yahoo! In January, Yahoo! bought GeoCities to snare its 3.5 million members and personal Web site service.

The combined companies will have a market capitalisation of about \$40 billion.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

BNP takeover will cost 6,000 jobs

BNP will axe about 6,000 jobs over four years under its plans to take over Paribas and Société Générale, equivalent to 10 per cent of the workforce. The job cuts will be implemented across the entire merged group. BNP made a hostile bid for Société Générale and Paribas, after Société Générale rebuffed it as a suitor at the eleventh hour in favour of merger with Paribas. The French regulators earlier this week gave the green light to the three-way merger and urged the banks to sort out their differences.

Baudouin Prot, BNP director-general, who was in London yesterday, claimed his bank's bid was by far the best option for Société Générale and Paribas. He pointed to the bank's own track record on increasing returns on equity. Over the past five years, BNP's return on equity has risen from 2.2 per cent to 11.8 per cent. Under the three-way merger plan, Mr Prot wants to raise this figure to 16 per cent through a system of cost-cutting and growth. The boards of Société Générale and Paribas are to meet next Tuesday to discuss the BNP bid.

Commentary, page 31. City Diary, page 33

Equitable challenge

AN ACTION group representing 1,500 Equitable Life investors has filed a writ against the insurer to widen the scope of a test case over guaranteed annuities being brought to the High Court in July. The Equitable Life Guaranteed Annuity Action Group is fighting Equitable's decision to cut the terminal bonuses of investors who choose to exercise options in their pension policies allowing them to take a retirement income 25 per cent higher than they would get from a conventional annuity today. Equitable is calculated to face a £1 billion bill.

Japan tackles bad loans

JAPAN yesterday launched a new institution to recover banks' bad loans, in what could be an important step towards repairing its battered financial system. The new government-backed body, the Resolution and Collection Corp, is modelled on America's Resolution Trust Corp, which helped to clean up the savings and loan fiasco of the 1980s. The RCC will buy problem loans from banks and then try to sell the collateral, mostly land, to recover as much money as possible. Japan's land prices fell for the eighth consecutive year in 1998.

UK oil revenue down

RISING North Sea oil prices came too late to avert a fall in revenues from UK oil and gas production in February. According to monthly data from the Royal Bank of Scotland's oil and gas index, oil revenues were down 9.4 per cent on the previous month and gas revenues were down by an estimated 3.9 per cent. The value of combined oil and gas production fell by an estimated 6.6 per cent on the month, to £40.5 million a day. The average price of the benchmark Brent crude was \$10.20 a barrel, down 27.5 per cent on February 1998.

Skillsgroup reshapes

SILLSGROUP yesterday continued its transformation from a computer reseller into a pure IT services group through the £32.5 million acquisition of Cap Gemini's British training division. After the deal, about 60 per cent of the group's revenues will come from services such as training, consultancy and recruitment. The remainder will come from upmarket computer reselling and related services. Skillsgroup shares rose 6 per cent yesterday to 323p, compared with 180p in November.

Tempus, page 32

King World for CBS

CBS, owner of the US television network, yesterday paid \$2.5 billion (£1.5 billion) for the King World production company, whose programmes include the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. The deal gives CBS access to King World's stable of talk and entertainment shows, and to the \$1 billion in cash hoarded by its founders, the brothers Michael and Roger King. The brothers will retain their jobs heading the syndication company when it becomes an arm of CBS. Profits from the *Oprah Winfrey Show* are about 40 per cent of King World's income.

Scats buys export unit

THE Southern Counties Agricultural Trading Society (Scats) is taking over Continental Grain's UK grain export business and assets for an undisclosed sum, it was announced yesterday. Scats will get Continental's Southampton deep water grain export facilities plus animal feedstuffs and fertiliser import facilities. Grain exports through the port of Southampton average more than 850,000 tonnes a year. The acquisition follows last year's takeover of Continental Grain's worldwide operations by Cargill, the agri-food concern that is America's largest private company.

Raphael's grim picture

SHARES of Raphael Zorn Hemsley fell 27p to 65p yesterday after the UK corporate finance advisory group said that because of poor market conditions in the insurance sector first-half profits would be well below expectations. The group, which deals in corporate finance, market-making and institutional stockbroking, claimed that its profits had been hit by the downturn in the general insurance sector, particularly in corporate finance. The company, which floated on AIM in 1996, made £1.3 million in the first half, last year.

Banner voices fears

BANNER CHEMICALS, the group formerly known as Sutcliffe Speakman, yesterday gave warning that it does not foresee any improvement in its sector until "the end of the fourth quarter". The announcement follows a profits warning in January. Stuart Lloyd, chairman and chief executive, has agreed to stand down as part of cost-cutting arrangements. His departure from the board is said to be "totally amicable". Banner currently has no borrowings and net assets of £7.2 million. The shares fell 14p to 84p.

Scotia founder raises £8.5m in share sale

BY PAUL DURMAN

DAVID HORROBIN, the controversial founder of Scotia Holdings, has raised an estimated £8.5 million by selling almost all his remaining 11.1 per cent stake in the drug development company.

The sale came only two days after Rob Dow, Scotia's chief executive, savagely criticised the state of the company and the development work that he took over from Dr Horrobin.

Dr Horrobin was forced out last May after a boardroom battle to seize back control from Dr Dow. Even before yes-

terday's sale, he had sold about £5 million of shares since September.

Perpetual, the fund management group, acquired 5.25 million of the shares owned by Dr Horrobin's Wimberley Investments, paying just over 100p a share. Nomura International placed another 3.35 million shares with other institutions. Perpetual, a big shareholder in the troubled British Biotech, is now Scotia's biggest investor, with an 11.35 per cent stake.

Dr Horrobin is expected to use some of the money raised



Horrobin: criticised

MAGAZINE

Cigars, loose women and political crises: if Cuba were a person it would be Bill Clinton. AA Gill reports from Havana

CULTURE

They're taking over: Bryan Appleyard on why Reeves and Mortimer deserve to be mainstream

STYLE

Teeth and gums: the secret to all-round bodily health



THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

مكتبة من الأجل

Are we about to see a cause célèbre that could prick the Internet bubble? If Cable & Wireless gets to court with its lawsuit against MCI, it could certainly prove a long and painful exercise for more than the direct participants.

MCI turned itself into America's number two long distance telephone carrier on the strength of its notoriously sharp wits. The group has been caricatured as a firm with an antenna on top. You do not lightly volunteer to get into a legal battle with so formidable an opponent.

News of the lawsuit pushed Cable & Wireless shares down 3 per cent as investors took refuge in C&W Communications, the UK offshoot. Clearly, traders mused, something has gone wrong with the wholesale and retail Internet business that C&W bought from MCI for £1 billion little more than six months ago.

At the best of times, it is hard for any board to allow that it might have been sold a pup. Indeed, the only time this is likely to occur is when the top team changes. Graham Wallace is supervising over a deal done under former C&W chief Dick Brown, the dynamic American who has since repatriated himself.

Even so, it is a double-edged sword. C&W was generally thought to have established a leading position in Internet networks at modest costs because MCI was a forced seller. In order

to be allowed to merge with WorldCom, whose UUNet is the market number one, MCI had to divest its number two business.

In the highly coloured language of its wrt, however, C&W claims that MCI tried to woo away its customers, denied access to customer contracts, held back key staff and generally made life hard. As a result, growth rates of 50-100 per cent collapsed to "far short of the rate at which the market is growing as a whole", tens of millions of revenue were lost and costs rose.

As yet, it is not clear whether this is a conventional contract spat in over-the-top American legalise or something that will inflict serious permanent damage on the business. Even after a change of management, the company is understandably not inclined to play up the import of its row to a home audience.

The significance, perhaps, is to show how fragile the Internet business can be. Growth rates are now so high that everyone can have a share. Turning that business growth into revenue and revenue into profit remains uncharted territory.

C&W's row with MCI WorldCom is a reminder that business

can just as easily be taken away,

that it may not be hard for new entrants to cannibalise the market and the conditions do not yet exist to eliminate enough low-overhead competition to establish the profit margins that share prices already anticipate.

Not being an Internet stock may be the mark of a dinosaur in retail, telecoms and financial services. Being an Internet stock is no guarantee of fortune.

French bank on money and flag

French bankers are only too aware that the eyes of the financial world will be on them next week. Boards of Société Générale and Paribas must decide whether to go along with an unprecedentedly hostile bid for both of them by Banque Nationale de Paris.

The spurned earlier suitor of SocGen has already outflanked

COMMENTARY by our City Editor

the substitute merger arranged by the other two. While that merger led to a fall in the combined share prices, BNP's hostile revenge has boosted all three.

The reason is simple. Putting SocGen and BNP together gives scope for massive cost-cutting, including phasing out at least 6,000 jobs in France alone. And BNP has shown it is able to cut costs. By trimming the cost ratio, it has become the most profitable of the big French groups, even if that only raises it to the standing of the Swiss.

Paribas is in different businesses such as consumer credit, investment banking and insurance. A merger of either of the high street banks with Paribas is more creative, making the framework for a universal bank on the German pattern. But it does not, of itself, save costs.

Inevitably, euro politics have intervened. The French Government, at least, appears to believe that it would be a great coup for

France to create the world's biggest bank in terms of assets. The SocGen/Paribas deal was immediately wrapped in the Tricolour at the Elysée. Now the Governor of the Bank of France has virtually instructed the two would-be victims to talk turkey with BNP in the wider national interest.

That man Ashcroft is back again

It is hard not to have a sneaking admiration for Michael Ashcroft's utter disregard for his reputation as "the controversial tycoon". If he had any concern at all for losing that tag, he would not be plunging so wholeheartedly into the mess at Corporate Services Group.

CSG, the employment and training group that owns what became of Blue Arrow, had already roused the City's ire with two poorly explained profit warnings in the space of three weeks. The finance director seems to have become an enemy in his own boardroom, prompting a shareholder attempt to throw out his chairman.

Just to liven things up further,

Mr Ashcroft has pitched in a

mind-bogglingly complex takeover proposal from a company that has yet to be formed. Investors are offered the tantalising prospect of taking paper in an Aim-listed company controlled by Mr Ashcroft and some cash.

The amount will fluctuate with the share price of an unrelated American company – unrelated, that is, except that Mr Ashcroft wants to sell some of his Tyco shares. And just for good measure, one of the main conditions of the offer flatly contradicts the board changes being sought by Schroders, Mercury and others.

Mr Ashcroft clearly thinks he can make a killing from CSG, but, to spice things up, has chosen to thumb his nose at almost the entire City while he does so. With so many players involved, this one is set to run and run.

Vacant hot seat

ONE more deadline has passed without a new Director-General being chosen to head the World Trade Organisation. Thailand's foreign minister and an ex-New Zealand prime minister are deadlocked. Even the EU's votes are split. The trouble is that only a diplomatic conciliator is likely to become a consensus candidate, but a tough leader is needed to hang some over-powerful heads together if a trade war some time in the next few years is to be avoided. Perhaps somebody should threaten trade sanctions.

Hanson buys second largest US brickmaker

BY ADAM JONES

HANSON, the building materials group, is buying the second-biggest brickmaker in America as part of its transatlantic expansion plan.

Hanson, which emerged from the break-up of the multinational empire created by Lord Hanson and Lord White, is buying the North American brick arm of Jannock, a Canadian company, for £160 million in cash on a debt-free basis.

Jannock made an operating profit of £20.4 million last year, on sales of £120.1 million. It draws 70 per cent of its sales from the US market. The remainder comes from Canada,

where it has a 70 per cent market share in Quebec and Ontario.

Hanson shares have risen strongly from 305p last September on the back of a buoyant US market, which helped overcome fears about the state of UK housebuilding and construction, where fears of slowing domestic growth or even recession had damaged investor sentiment. Yesterday, after the Jannock deal was announced, the shares fell to 535p, down 20p, by close of trading.

Nearly £17 million of the purchase price will be paid only when plans for a new brickmaking plant in Ontario are approved. Completion of the purchase is anticipated in the second quarter of this year.

A Hanson spokesman said the group will continue to consider bolt-on acquisitions for Jannock, which is its first venture into US brickmaking.

Hanson's UK brickmaking arm, which is the second-biggest in the country, has an operating margin of about 25 per cent, the spokesman said, compared with 17 per cent at Jannock.

He said Hanson's successful cost and pricing control systems, which are in the latter stages of being introduced into

its US aggregates businesses, will be implemented at Jannock. The spokesman said there would also be focused investment in areas such as kiln controls, to increase profits. However, it is unlikely that there will be purchasing benefits to be gained from Hanson's new bulk in the brickmaking market.

Andrew Dougal, chief executive, said: "The inclusion of the Canadian operations is consistent with our objective of gradually widening our geographic presence into a limited number of new areas outside our primary markets of the US and the UK."

TV deal and new chief for Scoot

SCOOT.COM, the loss-making Yellow Pages rival, yesterday announced the appointment of a new managing director and a digital TV deal with Cable & Wireless Communications (CWC), the cable group (Chris Ayres writes).

Jon Moloney, 40, will join Scoot.com from the UK division of Apple Computers, where he was managing director for three years. He replaces Martin Keogh, who becomes chief interactive and channel partnerships officer.

Scoot, which last year reported losses of £27 million (£15 million), is to develop and supply digital interactive TV services for CWC. Scoot shares were unchanged at 30p. *Tempus*, page 32

Inchcape sells in Middle East

BY PAUL ARMSTRONG

INCHCAPE has taken another step in its transition from a trading group to a vehicle distributor, with the sale of its marketing operations in the Middle East for \$116 million (£72.5 million).

The sale brings the amount raised from Inchape's asset disposal programme to £618 million since March last year.

This is expected to result in a one-off payment to shareholders of about £1 a share, in line with Inchape's promise to distribute the proceeds.

The sale of the Middle East marketing business, which was bought by Cupola Investments, a Dubai-based development capital group, leaves the company with only its Asia-Pacific office automation busi-

TT Group poised to raise stakes

TT GROUP said yesterday it was ready to increase its hostile takeover bid for Hall Engineering after John Sword, Hall's chief executive, unveiled an £82.8 million management buyout (Paul Armstrong writes).

The buyout, backed by Candover Partners, the venture capital group, has made a recommended offer of 155p a share. This compares with TT's existing offer of 136p. Hall shares closed 14p higher yesterday at 155p.

Mr Sword said yesterday that the MBO offer had secured acceptances representing 52 per cent of Hall's shares.

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Minimum wage leaves Cassandras out of court

Landmark has finally drowned protests from its detractors, writes Christine Buckley

Two million people are now better off. One in 11 of the working population has gained from yesterday's introduction of the national minimum wage — £3.60 for adults and £3 for workers aged between 18 and 21 — with pay increases averaging 30 per cent.

A legally enforceable minimum wage is the end of more than 100 years of campaigning by trade unions and brings the UK into line with many other countries that impose a basic floor on pay levels. But as in many employment issues, the Government's legislation has left some parties on both sides wrangling their dissatisfaction.

Unison, the biggest union, has shifted its campaigning from demanding a minimum wage to calling for a living wage and wants the level lifted to £4.79 — half of male median earnings. The TUC also believes the rate is way too low, arguing that employers should pay a minimum of more than £5.

Some employers, especially smaller companies, and economists have given warning of dire job losses as companies struggle to meet their new commitment. Business Strategies, the economic consultancy, has this week spoken of 80,000 job losses, while Patrick Minford, the right-wing economist, has said that up to 250,000 jobs could go.

Meanwhile, the TUC and the Confederation of British Industry are taking a more pragmatic line. While the TUC is not delighted at the rate and the CBI is not entirely pleased with its existence, both organisations have declared the minimum wage workable.

Industries such as hotels, retailers and services — that are labour intensive — and textiles, which face tough competition from cheap international rivals, will be the hardest hit. The hospitality sector will have to raise the pay of 30 per cent of its workers, while 15 per cent of retail workers are set to benefit.

Many large unionised workplaces will experience no difference after the start of the minimum wage, as the rates agreed already exceed the new starting level. The real effect will be felt by many workers in small businesses, part-time employees and those who work from home. Women workers will gain more than men as they are paid less on average.

However, many companies have pre-empted the launch of the minimum wage with recent pay increases. Interestingly, many are also choosing to pay all their workers at the same rate rather than force younger workers to take the lower statutory rate.

It is the small business world that has made many of the starker warnings over minimum pay. They complain that pay flexibility is a



Labour-intensive service sectors and retailers will be affected most by the new minimum wage

necessity for the new small business and that their market power is so slight it is impossible to pass on increased costs to their customers. The argument against this is that higher pay will reduce staff turnover which, in itself, is a drain on a business.

Some believe that the minimum wage could force some businesses either openly to flout the law or to drift into an informal economy, free from official scrutiny. The minimum wage's police will be some 100 special staff from the Inland Revenue. Their job

will be to make sure the country's employers comply with the legislation and to investigate complaints made by workers, either through employment tribunals or to the Department of Trade and Industry's hotline.

The police numbers could increase if the workload proves too great, but officials are optimistic that the majority of businesses will not break the law. The burden of proof in disputes will be on the employers, who face penalties if they ignore enforcement orders. They will have to pay each employee double the minimum wage per day to each worker for the duration of their defiance of an order. In addition, transgressing businesses will be fined although fines cannot exceed £5,000.

But wrangles over enforcement are likely to be dwarfed by the constant pressure from unions to up the rate.

Unison will hold a series of

celebrations today to welcome the minimum wage. Next week it will go back on the offensive with a big rock concert and rally in Newcastle attacking the rate. Organisers are

vate client business. He has been a shareholder in BP for years and has taken advantage of the enhanced dividend offer, which gives you an extra 25 per cent on top if you reinvest your payments in BP shares.

This has had to end, to be replaced by something called a dividend reinvestment plan, or Drip. It works much the same. But Barclays is refusing to offer this to customers, saying they must take cash. As Drips will be increasingly common for tax reasons, I suggest to Barclays they put their house in order.

"It's being looked at, and hopefully we will be able to do something in the next few months," a spokesman soothes.

Now, and I am indebted to John Batterby, tax partner at KPMG, for this, someone is worrying about tax evasion, and the benefit is to be limited in the Finance Bill to bikes used for commuting.

It raises the question, how will they check? Batterby himself imagines tax officers riding around on their bikes after us, but I think he has missed the obvious solution. Clearly the Revenue will have to order a huge fleet of gas-guzzlers to police the new dispensation.

MARTIN WALLER
city.diary@the-times.co.uk

Gen about a possible merger for some time. They arranged a meeting with their counterparts on Saturday, January 30, to finalise this. SocGen cancelled at the last moment.

The pilot agreement was to be signed yesterday by the two countries' respective Foreign Secretaries, the paper said, in the presence of an adviser from the European Commission. The Commission, a spoilsport as ever, then reminded readers of the date.

Off the menu
THE un-Gallic hostility surrounding the Banque Nationale de Paris bid for both Société Générale and Paribas becomes easier to understand.

Baudouin Prot, chief oper-

Drip feed

A READER complains about some autocratic treatment by

On yer bike

GORDON BROWN was boasting his green credentials

expecting up to 30,000 people and will use the occasion to press home their contention that £3.60 is only a start. Tickets are priced at £3, highlighting the lower level for younger workers. This rate was decided by the Government against the recommendation of the Low Pay Commission, which advocated £3.20. The decision ignited a storm of protest from unions that argued young people should not be paid less than older workers when they faced the same cost of living.

It is likely that the youth rate will be the first part of the minimum wage that is reconsidered in response to the controversy. It had been imposed because of greater fears of unemployment among younger workers. But if these concerns prove unfounded it could be raised before the standard rate is revised.

However, neither move is likely to be quick and Unison may have to hold a good number of rallies before the minimum wage nears its own objective — if it ever does. The Low Pay Commission is due to report to the Government on the impact of the minimum wage by the end of the year. But even then, the Government is unlikely to back a quick rise for fear of appearing hasty. While there has been much speculation about the economic impact of a minimum wage, the reality will only emerge after a prolonged period.

We may well soon see a spate of redundancies being blamed on the minimum wage. Whether or not this is the case, rather than falling markets or poor management or other competitive pressures, will remain to be seen.

Professor George Bain, chairman of the Low Pay Commission, has said that the minimum wage could take up to three years to bed down properly before its true impact can be ascertained.

This is probably a little long, in political terms, to keep the rate pegged at £3.60. Not only will the rate's value have diminished substantially by then, we will have had a general election. It will not harm a Labour Party that is often accused of being too business-friendly by its traditional supporters modestly to raise the minimum rate. The move could easily be explained to employers as merely an attempt to keep pace with inflation.

In doing this, the Government would not even be likely to encounter much opposition from the Conservatives. The party has become increasingly ambivalent towards the minimum wage. A combination of the Tories' new-found interest in the poor, and the realisation that pledging to slash the pay of millions of workers will not win votes, has led to a recent moderation in their stance.

Remarkably, John Redwood,

Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, admitted a couple of weeks ago that the Conservatives would not necessarily dismantle the minimum wage.

The pay regulation that was first promoted amid much protest is clearly seeing some of its high-profile detractors fall away. The Cassandras that warn of high unemployment costs could follow.

environmentally conscious axis was excluding bikes bought by employers from the list of taxable benefits.

Now, and I am indebted to John Batterby, tax partner at KPMG, for this, someone is worrying about tax evasion, and the benefit is to be limited in the Finance Bill to bikes used for commuting.

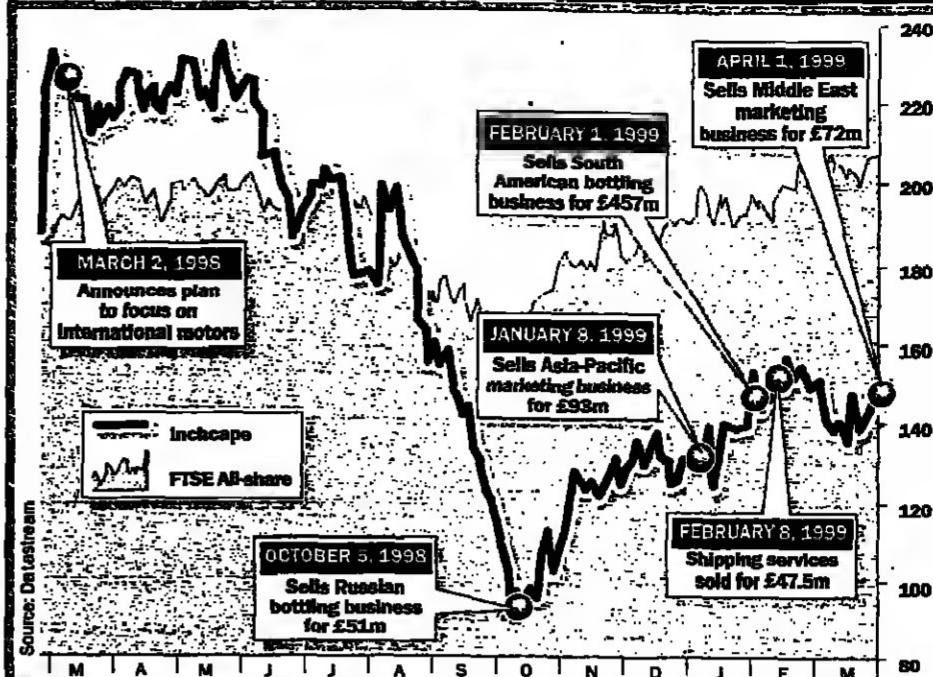
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MARTIN WALLER
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Gordon Brown will clamp

NO APPRECIATION SOCIETY



Acid test for trading house turned vehicle distributor

Paul Armstrong considers the impact of Inchape's disposal programme

Toyota, Mazda, Chrysler and Ferrari, covering 30 countries. UK sales generate about one-third of the distributorship's profit, with Europe and Asia providing much of the rest. However, Inchape is also selling an increasing number of cars in South America, the Middle East and Africa.

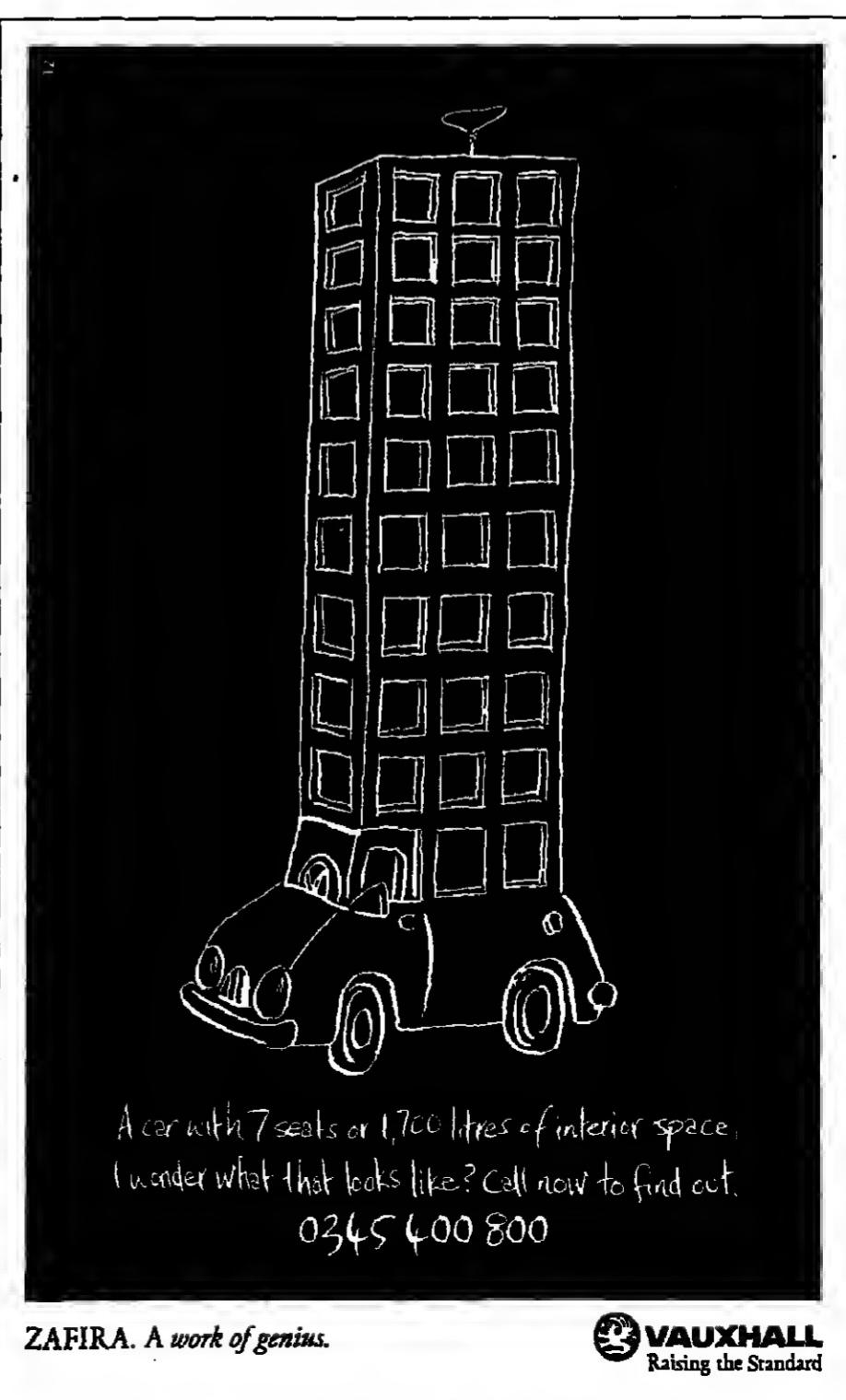
Those who see limited investment value in distribution companies argue that many of the prospects for organic growth are in the hands of those making the products and that acquisitions present the best chances to lift the bottom line.

But Mr Cushing rejects the assertion, saying advertising and after-sales services are just two ways in which vehicle distributors have a big impact on sales. He also points out that there are few, if any, significant acquisition opportunities for Inchape.

Mr Cushing cites figures showing that the markets in which Inchape operates grew 6 per cent last year. This compares with Inchape's growth rate of almost 13 per cent.

Inchape has also joined the rapidly growing line of companies searching for a way to include the Internet in their business. It has formed a joint venture with the US group AutoByTel, under which Inchape will operate a car purchasing web site similar to the highly successful model employed by its partner in America. Mr Cushing believes there are also bright growth prospects for Inchape's vehicle finance arm.

In the meantime, Inchape can start calculating the return to shareholders from the sale programme. Shareholders, for their part, may prefer to delay calculating their own returns from Inchape.



Glasgow makes itself a must-have location for top-flight retailers

There were no soap opera celebrities on hand to cut the ribbon and no free gifts being handed out. There wasn't even a bagpipe to be heard. But when the doors to Buchanan Galleries, Glasgow's newest shopping centre, were thrown open for the first time this week, about 100,000 people passed through in the first few hours.

Although many were looking rather than buying, a fair proportion of the scrum of people who managed to force their way onto the centre's escalators emerged clutching shopping bags. Even those just looking may well return to spend. The operators of the Galleries were gratified. "There has been a lot of interest," Sandy Cook, chief executive of the Buchanan Partnership, said. "Now we want to see it turned into business."

Buchanan Galleries, valued at £200 million, has 600,000 sq ft of space and 80 shops, including the first branch of the John Lewis department store to open in Glasgow. Alone, the centre will make a huge difference to how people shop in Glasgow. However, it is by no means the only development.

If planning consent is given for all the sites that developers want to turn into shops, a further 500,000 sq ft of retail space will be added in the city centre in the next three

Sarah Cunningham on openings for top stores in Scotland's shopping boom

years. Moreover, a huge shopping development covering up to 1 million sq ft is due to open five miles outside the city in September.

Capital Shopping Centres is building the Braehead shopping centre on the site of an old power station between Govan and Renfrew, west of Glasgow. After a toughening of planning regulations, it is likely to be the last big regional shopping centre to be built in Britain. It will be firmly mass-market, with large branches of Marks & Spencer, J Sainsbury and Woolworth. Ikea, the Swedish furniture company, may open its second Scottish branch there.

Glasgow's retail developments have been seized on as an opportunity for those English and overseas retailers that are under-represented, or even unrepresented, in Scotland to move in. Sainsbury, which has just 12 Scottish branches, will not only be in Braehead with a branch

big enough to qualify as a hypermarket, it has also opened its first branch of Sainsbury's Central at Buchanan Galleries. The format is similar to Tesco's successful Metro, and is intended to provide snacks and quick-to-prepare meals for the Galleries' workers and shoppers.

A London-based retailer that flirted with the idea of moving to the Galleries but ended up choosing Edinburgh instead is Harvey Nichols. And is intended to provide snacks and quick-to-prepare meals for the Galleries' workers and shoppers.

A London-based retailer that flirted with the idea of moving to the Galleries but ended up choosing Edinburgh instead is Harvey Nichols. Mr Cook is none too fond of the upmarket fashion store. By the time it had decided not to come to his Galleries he had already given up and let the space. "I am so glad we did not wait for Harvey Nichols," he says with a shake of the head. The site that Harvey Nichols might have taken is now occupied by the biggest branch of Habitat in Europe, a large Boots and the biggest branch of Next in Scotland.

The deal struck by Harvey Nichols in Edinburgh is reportedly

ASHLEY COOMBS

Among the shops recently opened are branches of Borders and Waterstone's, now two of the largest bookstores in Britain. Indeed, so many very large stores are emerging in Glasgow that you begin to wonder whether it is all going to be economically sustainable. Can Glaswegians spend enough to make these good investments for the developers and the retailers?

Mr Cook is sure that the investments will pay off. "Glaswegians have a relatively high disposable income," he said. "Housing ownership and car ownership are relatively low, and they like to shop and are fashion-conscious."

Robert Miller, retail analyst with Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, is also confident that it can work. "It really is a thriving city," he said. "And I'm sure there is plenty of scope to increase the amount of spending there."

Rents of about £180 per square foot at the Buchanan Galleries compare very favourably with London, where £400 or £500 per square foot can be paid for top sites. Also, the new developments provide the big stores that retailers now consider essential to show their full ranges. Glasgow looks likely to remain a big draw to retailers, as well as shoppers, for some time to come.



The Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow are attracting shoppers — and also retailers lacking outlets in Scotland



The Buchanan Galleries could be followed by a further 500,000 sq ft of new retail space in Glasgow

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Canadian buy for Tomkins

Tomkins, the conglomerate, is to buy ACD Tridon, a windscreen wiper manufacturer based in Canada for C\$15 million (£63.3 million). ACD Tridon, part of Devtek, will be bolted on to Tomkins's automotive engineering business.

Tomkins is paying £22.5 million in cash from existing debt facilities and assuming £40.8 million of ACD Tridon's debt. ACD Tridon last year made operating profits of £5.1 million on sales of £121 million.

Garton tumbles

Garton Engineering, the metals group, saw pre-tax profits almost halve to £80,200 last year after what Tim Garton, managing director, called an "extremely poor final quarter" because of an unexpected downturn in UK and export markets. Earnings per share fell to 14.4p, from 30.6p. The final payout falls to 5.25p (5.5p), giving an unchanged 8p total.

Mansfield progress

John Mansfield, the builders' merchant that is an acquisition vehicle for the UK Active Value Fund of Brian Myerson and Julian Treger, reported 1998 losses of £1.7 million, about half 1997's deficit. It said the £1.5 million cost of its unsuccessful bid for Marley has been picked up by Phillips & Drew, the fund manager that subscribed for shares.

Charlton in black

Premiership football has put Charlton Athletic into profit with a threefold rise in interim turnover to £9 million, on the back of television money and a tripling in sales of season tickets to 17,000. Pre-tax profits for the half year to December 31, after transfer costs, were £1.4 million, against losses of £1.1 million previously.

AFA fundraising

AFA Systems, provider of Musketee capital markets risk-management software, is raising £4.5 million by placing new shares at 90p. It says that it aims to spend the money on marketing Musketee. The shares rose 3p to 97.5p on a cut in 1998 losses to £1.4 million, from £1.8 million.

BUPA suffers £23m loss at core business

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

BUPA, the private health insurer, yesterday blamed a fall in its annual surplus on the Government's tighter fiscal regime for private healthcare and the economic downturn.

Sir Bryan Nicholson, chairman, reported a fall in BUPA's pre-tax surplus to £50 million in 1998 from £55 million in 1997.

BUPA's core UK insurance business incurred a £23.2 million loss as a result of an 11 per cent rise in the level of claims.

Edward Lea, finance director, said the increase in claims had been caused by the

million in technology and customer support services, which masked an overall reduction in costs.

Almost 40 per cent of income came from healthcare provision, compared with 27 per cent in 1997, following the acquisition of the care homes of Care First Group. Goldsborough Healthcare and Community Hospitals.

Turnover in the division leaped from £388.6 million to £694.4 million as a result of these purchases. The division also secured a 12-year £108 million contract to manage 15 homes for Bedfordshire County Council.

VFG aims to raise £10m

VFG, the broadcast video, film and grip equipment hire and sales company, is raising £10 million by way of an open offer to fund expansion. The placing is to be made on a one-for-ten basis to shareholders at 50p a share (Matthew Barbour writes).

VFG also gave warning that the first half of the current year would produce a "small loss". David Rudd, new executive chairman, said that in the year to end November pre-tax profits rose 30 per cent to £1.2 million on sales up 166 per cent to £14.5 million. The full-year dividend has been set at 1.15p (ip).



David Rudd unveiled profits up 30 per cent to £1.2 million

PGA sells non-core land

BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

PGA European Tour Courses, the golf course operator in which Mark McCormack's IMG has a 19.3 per cent stake, yesterday confirmed its drive to focus on its four flagship courses by selling two blocks of "non-essential" land for £1.5 million.

The group, which over the past two years has realised £9.5 million from the sale of non-core assets, said its strategic re-focusing on its flagship facilities is now largely completed.

PGA is due to open a third course at its Woburn site next summer as well as a new course at Catalonia, outside Barcelona, in two months' time.

Michael Friend, chief executive, countered recent speculation that PGA is looking to sell-

off its two smaller Collingtree Park and Stockley Park clubs.

The group reported pre-tax profits for 1998 up 8.5 per cent at £1.3 million (£1.2 million) on turnover down 35 per cent at £6.8 million. Mr Friend said the reduction in turnover reflected the consolidation of the group's operations.

Earnings per share rose 1.2p (1.0p). There is no dividend.

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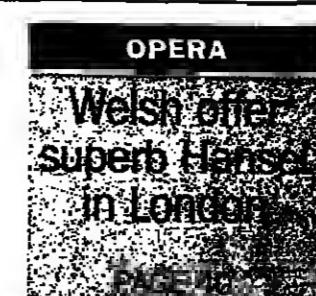
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POP

THE TIMES

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OPERA

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At times of turmoil — when bombs are falling, homes burning and innocents fleeing — music can seem like a distraction, a frippery, even an immoral luxury. The inclination to lapse into desolate silence in the face of adversity is nothing new. "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept," the ancient Israelites lamented. "As for our harps, we hanged them up upon the trees."

What can music do, what has it ever done, to cure a famine, curb a tyrant, or reverse a terrible wrong? Even worse, is music not obscenely indiscriminate in bestowing its favours? Didn't Hitler's butchers often have excellent ears for Mozart? If music be the food of love, what went wrong in so many cases?

It's hard to counter such bleak rhetorical questions with hard evidence of music, or any art form, as a force for moral good. But there are two points to be made. The first is that the Israelites didn't hang up their harps; we wouldn't have the Psalms today if they had done. And neither, 25 centuries later, did their descendants who — when herded by the Nazis into the Theresienstadt concentration camp and

sadistically deprived of liberty, possessions, hope and life — responded by creating the most extraordinary operas in musical history.

What gave them the strength? The theories are many, but I think they wanted to show, even as they faced imminent execution, that civilisation is stronger than death, stronger than tyranny, stronger even than the Third Reich. If those brave folk could make such music in such a hell, the onus is surely on us never to let the harps fall silent.

And the second point? It's simply this. Although music itself may be morally neutral, the social act of making music, of learning to understand the other man's tune, of generously giving of one's talents and receiving equally generous applause — that surely remains one of civilisation's most potent weapons in the eternal fight against the dark side of human nature.

These thoughts struck me this week because, while the world and its smartest missiles were being

sucked into the ancient racial hatreds of the Balkans, I was also being drawn into a rather more benign meeting of modern Western technology and ancient tribal emotions. For many years (and doubtless with a wry sense of irony) the German state broadcasting company Westdeutscher Rundfunk has been putting together a priceless recording archive of the world's greatest folk singers and instrumentalists — from Senegal to Syria to the Shetlands to Sindh. In the early 1990s the broadcasters did a deal with the World Network record label to make CDs of this stuff, and 49 revelatory discs have now been issued (distributed in Britain by Harmonia Mundi). I have been catching up with the latest batch, and as I eagerly rip each disc out of its packaging my sense of wonder at the variety of human creativity grows ever stronger.

In his great poem *Show Louis MacNeice* wrote that the "world is crazier and more of it than we

Or young singers such as the Tunisian chanteuse Sonia M'Barek reclaiming — with a potent mixture of scholarship and unbridled passion — at least a few of the haunting *nubas* that all but disappeared from human hearing for five centuries after the Muslims were expelled from Spain in 1492.

Only 25 years ago, when I was a music student, "ethnomusicology" was a dusty cranny of academe — full of strange boids who disappeared, Bartók-like, for months into "the field" with antique tape recorders, and then wrote impenetrable essays on "the migration of the mixolydian mode". Since then, world music has exploded as a commercial force. But with this admirable expansion of popular musical horizons have come doubts about the validity, the "purity" if you like, of what we are being offered.

Are all these new stars from Africa, Cuba and Bangladesh genuinely representative of their country's venerable folk idioms, or is their

art being tarted up and watered down for Western ears and wallets? Will the future of folk music be nothing but a series of glossy hybrids — more well-meaning alibis like *Graceland*, more zippy shows like *Riverdance*, more cultural mishmashes like David Byrne's *African Sanctus*?

T he fears are misplaced. Try to fix any language — verbal or musical — for months, try to freeze its "purity", and you kill it. Indeed, what strikes one time and again about the World Network CDs is how "impure" these ostensibly ancient folk music traditions are.

The fact is that musicians have cheerfully borrowed from other cultures for centuries. Thus, our Greek clarinet virtuoso plays on an instrument introduced to his village by the military bands of the occupying Turkish army in the 19th century. Similarly the Tunisian melodies of M'Barek, the soulful

Sufi glories on a disc from Pakistan, and the fatalistic howl of flamenco singing all derive from the same root: the Moorish empire of the Middle Ages. And the concoction of influences tapped by the Peruvian singer, Carmen Florez is even stranger: a mixture of pre-Columbian sacred dances, harps imported by 16th-century Jesuits, Viennese waltzes brought by exiled 19th-century Europeans, and the ancestral African rhythms of the black slaves on the plantations.

So what conclusions do we draw? That when tribes are receptive to good ideas from abroad, when they relish diversity rather than fearing it, they gain far more than they lose — both in music and in "real life"? That when tribes ruthlessly start to "cleanse" their culture of "alien" influences — as the Nazis signalled by banning the music of Mendelssohn and other Jews — they are on the road to damnation? Such statements seem blantly obvious. Yet our continent is again at war because these truths are apparently not self-evident to everyone. Stop all the clocks. Cancel the millennium. Europe is sliding back into the Dark Ages.

Closed ears, closed minds, then open war

IN THE ARTS
RICHARD MORRISON

think, incorrigibly plural". He felt, he said, "the drunkenness of things being various" — and so did I as I listened to the Japanese shakuhachi master Tajima Tadashi coaxing infinite gradations of tone and emotion from his 18 inches of bamboo; or the astonishing Greek folk clarinetist Petros Loukas Chalkias cartwheeling through scales that were old when Athens was young.

The only good game in town

Two consecutive first nights, two revivals of plays that triumphed on Broadway in the 1970s. And which of the week's American offerings carries more punch? Not Neil Simon's *Prisoner of Second Avenue*, an attack on the evils of New York from which the city emerges with a torn fingernail and a slightly bruised earlobe. Surprisingly, the answer is D.L. Coburn's *The Gin Game*, which involves a series of spats between two 70-year-olds in a retirement home.

Mark you, we are not talking Lennox Lewis here. Nothing more physically awful happens than that Joss Ackland's cranky Weller Martin hurls aside a card table and Dorothy Tutin's Fonsia Dorsey pummels him on the chest. But at the Savoy, as sadly not at the Haymarket, two ace performers accept a dramatist's invitation to find the harshness in his piece.

The onus at the Savoy seemed decidedly mixed. As the programme tells us, Donald Coburn won Pulitzer for *The Gin Game* and saw it performed everywhere from Estonia to Argentina to China. As it fails to add, he has not had a substantial success since, and when he opens his *Oxford Companion to American Theatre* he must read that the play exemplifies "the sorry or peculiar state of playwriting" in an era when soaring costs made two-handers commonplace and dramatic action minimal. "Slight" was the verdict of the critic Harold Bloom when he reviewed Jessica

Retiring but by no means shy: Dorothy Tutin (Fonsia) and Joss Ackland (Weller) square up for a fight over the cards in D.L. Coburn's *The Gin Game*

Nor is the play just about male competitiveness. All that remains for Weller, who has mislaid a wife, three children and a once-thriving business, is day after day in a state of patronising nurses make him join in choruses of *Happy Birthday* and other offstage jollities. Since he won't accept responsibility for his predicament, resentment has overwhelmed him. Wincing at cards has become compensation for becoming that creature that so scares Americans: a loser. And despite her offhandness, Fonsia may be

sublimating something too: hatred of the husband she divorced and anger at the son who refused to reject him.

Coburn does not crack as good jokes as Simon — Weller's remark that he is "suffering from one of the most advanced cases of old age in the US" is about the best — but at least they reflect character. More surprisingly, he resists the temptation to sentimentalise his characters or give them a soft landing. But then he has two performers who can em-

body vulnerability, insecurity, grief without making themselves gratuitously lovable. Both parts, especially Fonsia, are somewhat underwritten — but do you notice when Tutin is smiling her pert, annoying smile or painfully admitting she has lied about her life, or when Ackland is bantling what feels to him like a tactical nuclear weapon in his stomach? No, you don't.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Appliance of science

I t must be that time of the century again. While Tom Stoppard's fractal drama *Arcadia*, plays at the Gaze, at the other end of O'Connell Street a young Irish playwright is also seeing what feels to him like a tactical nuclear weapon in his stomach? No, you don't.

Likewise *Observatory* is set in the same room at two different points in time, and as in *Arcadia*, there is a historian snooping around, trying to recover all the pieces of a long neglected jigsaw and metaphorically join the past and the present.

Back in 1799, it seems an Armagh Observatory employee hanged himself for uncertain reasons. Now Nicola McGloughlin (Mary O'Driscoll), a present-day astronomer, and Jon McKenna (Charlie Bonner), a local historian, are engaged in uncovering the facts, whether they lie in the realms of archive documents or in the realms of funky physics.

"Quantum physics? Do you know anything about quantum physics?" asks the slightly tetchy Mr. McGloughlin, and faster than anyone can say Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle Schrödinger's Cat is meowing away as the audience is whizzed through a quick tour of all things sub-atomic.

While *Observatory* might possibly have survived as a time travelling sci-fi love story, the author quickly overfills the play's baggage. Soon he is also uncloaking a conspiracy concerning the aftermath of the United Irishmen's rebellion. As Carville attempts to pack

sense that bits and pieces of the play have come loose.

Des Cave pours surly majesty into the patrician chief astronomer Hamilton, but O'Driscoll and Bonner never really have that option. Director Jason Byrne finds no clever way of leading his audience backward and forward in time. A firmer hand with the staging might perhaps have brought some focus.

LUKE CLANCY

Clown down Mexico way



and the inevitable passions start to fly. The Russians' visit to Mexico is an exercise in extremes: the glorious colour pinching Eisenstein's frustration at filming in monochrome, public displays of penitence mocking private anguish, and the fluid passion of the Mexican people stirring up the murky blood of their awkward and sober guests.

Eisenstein tells the story with an attractive blend of song, film and text: the cast's energetic performances style and sparing use of props and scenery ensure that the action moves at a cracking pace, despite a slightly baggy script. While this works well for lighter episodes and occasional bursts of tragedy, the description of Eisenstein's extreme emotional complexity never quite hits the mark.

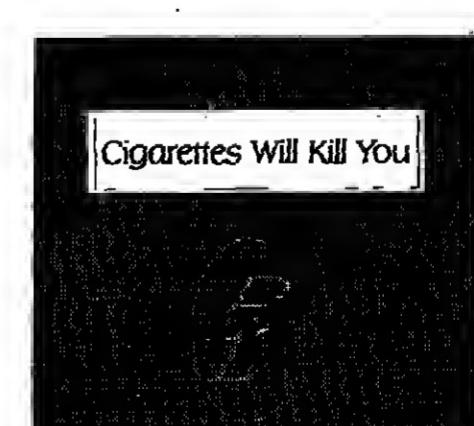
Theoretically there is nothing wrong with portraying Stalin as if he were Cap-

tain Haddock on Ketamin, but the decision to play the dictator for laughs then undermines Eisenstein's extraordinary revelation that he cannot help seeing the man as a scarlet-cheeked clown. Likewise the angst over "inappropriate" feelings towards his colleague Alexanrov does not quite reach the anticipated pitch. While much of the blame for this is due to inappropriate juxtaposition, there is a slightly emotionally repressive quality to Henry Hawkes's otherwise convincing portrayal of Eisenstein.

The didacticism of the unnecessary early scenes is particularly frustrating given the richness of the Mexico material; by focusing on intrigues of sex and passion, they leave little space for the men's complex reaction to the social and political resonance of their visit. In honesty, any complaint about this prolixity is redundant given the sheer complexity of Eisenstein's extreme emotional range.

HAWKES

HETTIE JUDAH



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■ POP ALBUMS

Echoes of the Bunnymen

ARTS

THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999

■ WORLD MUSIC

Chandra's global aim

Living
off the
land

ANTONIO FORCIONE

Ghetto Paradise
(Naim naim032)
ALTHOUGH he has been living in the UK for the best part of two decades now, and has established himself via solo gigs and duo work in Acoustic Mania as a fixture on the London scene, guitarist Antonio Forcione has roots in the Adriatic hill village of Montecatone. Much of the inspiration for the delicate yet busily virtuosic music on this album has its source in his early experiences in this farming community, and to help him express his feelings about his ghem Paradise he has enlisted two of jazz's most versatile and sensitive sidemen, both well versed in the quicksilver intricacies of guitar music: bassist Kai Eck-

JAZZ ALBUMS

hardi de Camargo and percussionist supreme Trilok Gurt.

Whether backed by them or by an equally surefooted, fleet UK contingent including saxophonist Ed Jones, drummer Nic France and percussionist Bosco de Oliveira, Forcione is always nimble and quick-witted. Utilising a variety of instruments — steel and nylon-stringed, fretless and Spanish guitars — he imbues his bright but intense themes with (to borrow a phrase from one of his chief inspirations, the Guitar Trio) passion, grace and fire.

BRASSERIE TRIO

Musique Mécanique
(Leo CD LR 269)
THE Brasserie Trio — trumpeter Alberto Mandarini, trombonist Lauro Rossi, baritone/tenor saxophonist and bass-clarinetist Carlo Actis Dato — began life in 1992 as a spin-off from the Instabile Orchestra, and the wit, irreverence and elegance of their music is immediately reminiscent of the larger ensemble.

Like the full orchestra, too, they draw on an extraordinary variety of musical forms for their repertoire — calypso rubs shoulders with Italian tarantella, Dixieland with free jazz, jaunty danceable romps with the most plaintive, affecting airs — but it is their imaginative use of their necessarily limited instrumental resources that really impresses. Each man is able to switch with consummate ease between his rhythmic supporting role and guis, cogent soloing, and the resulting album — recorded live in Pisa — is at once informed and assured.

DAVID SINCLAIR

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CHRIS PARKER

Orbital limp back to Earth

NEW POP ALBUMS

ORBITAL
The Middle of Nowhere
(Iffrr/London 556 076 £15.99)
ARRIVING in the week that a glove puppet called Flat Eric steered a strange, angular and utterly minimalist techno groove to the top of the singles chart, Orbital's fifth album, *The Middle of Nowhere*, sounds rather conventional. The duo's music remains a marriage of science and symphony, but whereas using synthesizers and drum machine loops to create long, mock-orchestral themes once sounded revolutionary, such techniques are now commonplace.

And, after ten years as Orbital, the brothers Paul and Phil Hartnoll have refined their musical approach to the point at which some of these carefully structured electronic suites are now haunted as much by the spectre of Mike Oldfield as by the party spirit of the rave generation. Amusing is it to hear the voice of Rolf Harris explaining the workings of the stylaphone at the start and finish of the current single, *Style*, his contribution underlines the record's surprisingly quaint sound.

To compound the effect, the three years since Orbital's last album, *In Sides*, have been one of the most frantic and fertile periods in the history of dance music, and while there is nothing wrong with fast-paced breakbeat numbers such as *Know Where to Run* and *I Don't Know You People*, the listener is left with the nagging impression that this has all been done in recent times with greater vigour and panache by Propellerheads, Prodigy and others.

PAUL WESTERBERG
Suicide Gratification
(EMI/Chrysalis 7243 4 99145 £15.99)

IF HEART was all it took then Paul Westerberg would be up there with Madonna and Michael Jackson. As it is, the former frontman of the Replacements remains one of the great never-beens of rock'n'roll (the "Mats" were the critically revered band from Minneapolis whose Best Of compilation goes by the sad title *All For Nothing*).



Dance and techno have moved on in the three years since Orbital released their last album, leaving Paul and Phil Hartnoll in *The Middle of Nowhere*

Suicide Gratification, Westerberg's third solo album, confirms once again his beautiful loser status with sting-in-the-tail songs such as *Best Thing That Never Happened and It's a Wonderful Lie*; "How am I looking? I don't want the truth! What am I doing? I ain't in my youth/I'm past my prime, or was that just a pose?" ...

Although recorded cheaply, it is an album which places a premium on traditional songwriting craft, and its affecting mixture of painfully honest ballads and sparkling, minor-key rockers illustrates why Westerberg remains a potent influence on bands such as Wilco who have come up in his wake.

ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN
What Are You Going To Do With Your Life?
(London 556 080 £15.99)

AFTER the hoopla surrounding their comeback album, *Evergreen*, in 1997, there is a predictable sense of anticlimax about the new Echo & the Bunnymen, a collection

of introspective ballads and lilting love songs that finds singer Ian McCulloch musing over the big questions in life.

There are no songwriting credits on the artwork, but with guitarist Will Sergeant reduced to a marginal presence on most of the songs, and bassist Les Pattison replaced by one Guy Pratt on all but the

last track, it seems safe to assume that this is a McCulloch solo album in all but name.

As such, it reveals a reflective side to his personality that is at odds with the cocksure star of popular legend. "I know the lines are showing/I can't keep them in", he sings in *Rust*, a song in which he acknowledges not only his own mortality, but his culpability and fallibility too. Despite this low-key approach, the album is made all the more engaging by such insights.

DAVID SINCLAIR

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Clive Davis meets the redoubtable Sheila Chandra, singer of the world

Across the great divide

According to Sheila Chandra, it lies in "letting the voice fly". Where that inner voice of the subconscious will choose to carry her — to India, Ireland or Andalucia — is the key to creativity. "It's almost like a cellular memory," she says. "When it happens I feel I'm in touch with the place where the very first singer was, millions of years ago."

Over the past 15 years Chandra, a South London-born "world citizen", has charted a distinctive journey across frontiers in search of the ancestral roots of song. A photogenic teenage pop star with the band Monsoon in the early 1980s, she has matured into a committed artist who has fused tradition and innovation to make a category all her own.

A new compilation assembles some of her most provocative work for Peter Gabriel's world music label, Real World, in a blend of traditional Indian drones, English folk songs, Celtic laments and a lullaby by Manuel de Falla. *Moonsung — A Real World Retrospective* is no brash "greatest hits" set of melodic hooks, but an imaginatively sequenced dreamscape of vocal effects and Spartan instrumental textures.

Meeting Chandra herself is not quite so serene an experience. Self-willed and accustomed to controlling all aspects of her studio work and her business affairs, she gives the impression that, in an ideal world, she would ask all the questions in interviews, too.

But she probably has good reason to be suspicious of the media. Asian culture may be trendy now, but Chandra seems well aware of the dangers of being caught up in mere fashion. Nor does she want to be portrayed as the cu-

rator of a museum-like musical culture.

Although her parents were born in Kerala, her immersion into Indian traditional music was anything but automatic. "I ignored most of it until I got into Monsoon," she says. "Nobody ever said it was unhip, but it was. We just thought of it as the music of our parents: there was no sense that it was part of a rich heritage." Soul music cast a bigger shadow. She recalls being fascinated by the gospel mannerisms of Dionne Warwick. She even admits that the first record she ever bought was the Floozies' kitsch slowdancing epic, *Float On*.

Growing up between cultures, Chandra studied at theatre school and landed a long-running role in the children's TV series *Grange Hill*. By the time she was 17 her vocal talents (nourished in lonely hours of practising in the stairwell at the family home) had carried her into Monsoon. Although the group's first single, *Ever so Lonely*, entered the Top Ten, progress thereafter was frustratingly slow.

Chandra later turned to solo work. From attending listening to vocalists from other traditions and continents, she became aware of the common heritage that linked European folk singers with the ornamented vocal styles of Arabia and India.

Her trilogy of Real World recordings was inaugurated by the enchanting *Weaving My Ancestors' Voices*. Meanwhile she abandoned the city for the countryside, settling in Glastonbury: "The silence around me there enters my work," she says. "I don't think I could live in the city and produce the same subtleties."

After a long period of concen-



"Let the voice fly" is Sheila Chandra's advice

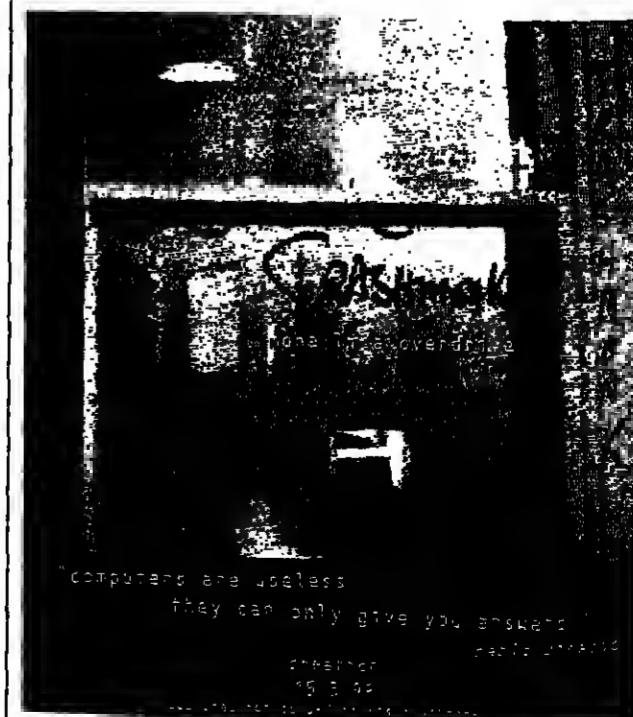
trating on the studio, she felt ready to venture into live performances, culminating in a world tour of America. To-

day she still has reservations about what the classical pianist Glenn Gould called the "non take two-ness" of the concert stage.

"Some artists prefer working live, and the sense of having no safety net," she says.

"To me it's much more of a technical enterprise. I like to have the fifth chance to change things. I could eat and sleep in a studio. You can play God there. It seems bland to go on the road and do the same thing over and over, and have to sort out any changes in the running order with the band. Besides, if I'd taken that path, I wouldn't have had time to learn what I had to learn."

● *Moonsung — A Real World Retrospective* is released on Monday



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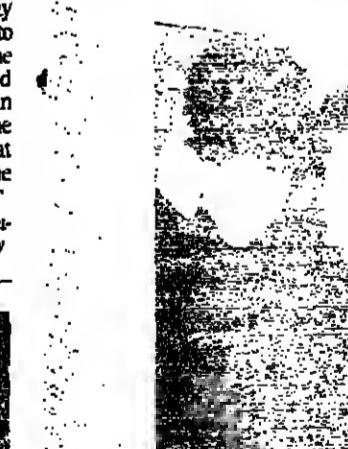
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POP OPINION

HOW TO
WORK A
POP MIRACLE

IT'S GREAT WHEN



■ POP OPINION

Immortality beckons

How to work a pop miracle

Resurrection doesn't have quite the same ring when all it means is hype

One of pop's many functions (alongside making you dance, making you cry, making you accelerate dangerously when the chorus happens, and ensuring that wherever you are in the world, if you yell "I see a little silhouette-o-a man!" someone will unfailingly "shriek 'Scaramouche! Scaramouche! Will you do the fandango?' back at you) is the taking of biblical mythology and rendering it down into a small greasy pellet. Take, for instance, the walls of Kiroko tumbling down. Roger Waters built one out of polystyrene and kicked it down on Pink Floyd's *The Wall* tour.

Or making a blind man see. Primal Scream's ... Robby Gillespie claims it happened to him on *Movin' On Up*, although the moment of healing may actually have been something as simple as removing his fringe from his eyes.

And then there's crucifixion.

It's never enough for your average pop gonk to simply get a slagging; they are "crucified" by the gutter press they so assiduously courted in their dog days; and when their next single gets bought into the charts, and lands at No 8, then that's "resurrection". Little matter that Jesus Christ hung from nails embedded in his palms and died a prolonged death from a combination of dehydration and shock; when Robbie Williams got fat from eating too many pies — and then got so drunk he looked cross-eyed for six months — and the press painted all this out, that was as bad as the nail-hand death thing.

Of course a pop star talking about crucifixions and resurrections has about as much meaning as Kate Moss declaring war on split ends, but there have certainly been occasions when a pop star's utterings have led to them, if not being hung up by their hands until dead, then being poked by centurions' swords until they

squeaked. The most famous was, obviously, John Lennon's "We're bigger than Jesus" quote, which prompted Christians to burn Beatles records across Middle America. Lennon should have called on Beatles fans to instigate fit-for-Bible bonfires in retaliation. Alas, it was left to Ringo to pull "cute" faces until the Christians got distracted by something else.

Jerry Lee Lewis was told he would burn in the furthest reaches of Hell — something he'd probably worked out for himself long before — when the press found out he had wed his 13-year-old cousin. And when Roy George was arrested for heroin possession after he admitted to being an addict, and had to hide while the tabloids ran stupid headlines such as "I tried orange juice to save George" and "Only six weeks to live"; that was, you know, quite a bad year for him.

Pop resurrections, on the other hand, are practically non-existent. When, after ten years on the pop pole, Duran Duran got to No 6 in 1994, it appeared to be a resurrection, but turned out to be a mere Baker's Rising — the phenomenon whereby a corpse, on entering the crematorium, appears to sit up and attempt to leave the big flaming oven.

The same icky corpse-curving mistake for reanimation has also recently occurred with Human League, E17, Pete Wylie, Babylon Zoo and Gene. But it's important to understand that when pop stars talk of a resurrection, what they really mean, in the non-mythical world, is "a comeback", "a return to making money", "being invited to nice parties again". Deposed pop stars dream of this resumption of services nightily: anyone who makes it from limbo back into the light — such as Cher — is viewed as a magical, glory-wreathed Lazarus; someone lucky, holy and blessed.

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John Lennon once stated that the Beatles were bigger than Jesus, an opinion not borne out by subsequent events

Lisa Verrico meets the happily reformed bad boys of Electronic

Life's great when you're straight



Marr and Sumner: working hard and loving it

Bernard Sumner's musical career may be into its twenty-first year, but the Mancunian singer has never been busier. Last summer saw him return to the stage with New Order, which is soon due to begin recording new material. Earlier this year, he played with Primal Scream and contributed vocals to a forthcoming single by the Chemical Brothers. Meanwhile, with former Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr, Sumner has been making his third album as Electronic.

"There was a period last year when I felt as though I had taken on too much," he says. "Johnny and I were working in the studio in Manchester all week, then every Friday night I was taking the train to London to rehearse with New Order. It was like having two demanding jobs at the same time."

To add to his troubles, Sumner found himself suffering from stage fright. "I have never been comfortable in front of a big audience," he admits. "When New Order were playing stadiums in the 1980s, I coped by hiding behind drink and drugs, but I was constantly ill and incredibly unhappy. Afterwards, I couldn't face touring again because I thought I would end up in the same state."

When New Order reformed for last year's Reading Festival, Sumner resolved to play it straight. "I felt I needed to con-

tinued to get into the studio. When I played guitar, it was like I was 16 again. I trusted my instincts. If it rocked, it was OK. We definitely overcooked the last album [*Raise the Pressure*], labouring over each song for months. Bernard and I are in an odd position that we have unlimited time. That was our downfall."

To prevent themselves making the same mistake with *Twisted Tenderness*, the pair employed a producer for the first time. The job fell to veteran New York hip-hop producer Arthur Baker, who had worked with Sumner's band in the early 1990s on singles such as *Confusion*.

"We wanted Arthur because he is great with beats and rhythm," says Sumner. "It didn't quite work out as planned though. We ended up producing a lot of it ourselves and Johnny did most of the mixing. With hindsight, Arthur was good to have around because he told us when enough was enough." Baker also brought in former Cameo keyboardist Merv De Peyer, who was largely responsible for replacing Electronic's formerly clean-cut synths with a dirtier, more distorted sound. Add the fact that Marr was persuaded to play more guitar, more loudly, and it is little surprise that new songs such as the album opener *Make it Happen* have a touch of the Chemical Brothers about them.

"We both felt really inspired during recording," recalls Marr. "I was getting up at six

in the morning because I was so keen to get into the studio. When I played guitar, it was like I was 16 again. I trusted my instincts. If it rocked, it was OK. We definitely overcooked the last album [*Raise the Pressure*], labouring over each song for months. Bernard and I are in an odd position that we have unlimited time. That was our downfall."

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"It's probably why it's the single," says Sumner. "The first single I ever bought was *Ride A White Swan* by T. Rex. To this day, I don't have a clue what that's about, but it's still a great song."

Vivid is out on Parlophone on Monday. *Twisted Tenderness* is out on April 18.

ARTS

كذا من الأصل

39

■ POP INTERVIEW

Bernard Sumner returns

The names to follow

Ireland has produced many great songwriters, says Nick Kelly, and the latest is Ken Sweeney, aka Brian

The year's first truly great album is upon us. And it's by a band called Brian. A seamless collection of poignant, arresting songs. *Bring Trouble* traces the steps from the giddy delirium of love's first flourish to the heartbreak of betrayal and disillusionment, before arriving at an eventual reaffirmation of life and love.

The author of this song cycle is Ken Sweeney, a London-based Dubliner in his early thirties, who is Brian's heart and soul. He coaxed respected musicians to play on the album, including members of the High Llamas and the Cocteau Twins, while some of the Divine Comedy will feature in his touring band.

"It's all about my own memories of growing up in Dublin and falling in love," he explains. "If you look at a writer like Carson McCullers or filmmakers like Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, they each have this recurring theme throughout their work that in relationships and in love people transcend their own lives. That's pretty much what a song like *Wherever We're Going* is all about. That contact, that shared experience with other people is where the greatest wealth lies."

There are several potential hit singles on the album, a case in point being the effervescent *This Kitchen, Sam*. "I was staying in a friend's house in Termonfeckin where I wrote a lot of these songs. It was early in the morning and I was thinking just how weird the inside of a kitchen looks at that time. So you get these lines about the hardened sugar on a sugar bowl, the humming of the fridge, the blackened dirt on the cooker."

It so happens that the aforementioned friend is one of the writers of the cult sitcom, *Father Ted*. Indeed, Sweeney himself had a cameo in the final episode, appearing in full clerical garb alongside a certain Father Brian Eno.

"Getting to act opposite Eno was a high point. Between takes we talked about music and I owned up to being a musician. He asked me what my band was called. When I said Brian, his face lit up. He said: 'That's the greatest compliment anybody has ever paid me.' And I had to say: 'Well, actually, it's not after you, Brian. It's named after the bass player in the Blades' — a revered Dublin band of the early



Brian's main man: Ken Sweeney revisits his past

1980s. There and then I blew any chance of getting him to produce my album."

While retaining the warmth and lyrical depth of Brian's earlier work, *Bring Trouble* has a musical breadth that acknowledges the developments of the intervening years. "The early stuff was very emotive and heartfelt, maybe a little too earnest," says Sweeney. "I would like to make that kind of music just a little bit more accessible and build on it. I'm sorry for the people who were expecting jingly jangly guitars on the new album. I got bored with that and I want to try something different."

● *Bring Trouble* is released on Monday by Setanta Records. Brian plays *Upstairs at the Garage*, London, on April 22.

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LISTINGS

Day of Passions

ARTS

THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999

CONCERTS

'Anti-millennium' music

RECOMMENDED THIS WEEKEND

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marti Hargreaves

LONDON

ST JOHN PASSION: Leading London choir Polyphony gives a performance of Bach's moving, powerful oratorio. Steven Layton conducts an impressive line-up of singers accompanied by Baroque orchestra. Carbone, 20 St John Street, Smith Square (0171-222 1051). Today, 7.30pm.

VISITINA BRAHMS TRIO: The award-winning piano trio, currently on an international tour, plays London a visit with a programme of Rachmaninov, Mendelssohn and Brahms. Wigmore Hall (0171-925 2141). Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

THE COLONEL BIRD: Bulgarian author Hristo Boytchev's award-winning novel about a man taken over by his libido. Delightfully a masterpiece. Rupert Gould directs. Gate (0171-229 0708). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

CITY AT EASTER: Singers Mark Padmore and Barbara Hannigan present the City of London Singers for more Bach, this time the *St Matthew Passion*. Nicholas Kramer conducts (tonight, 8pm). Tomorrow, 7.30pm. The concert concludes a concert by Michael O'Sullivan and the Irish Chamber Orchestra (7.30pm). On Sunday, 4pm. In Northern Ireland it is followed by a series of other musicians and story tellers (7.30pm). Barbican (0171-639 6891).

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: Staple Easter fare is also on offer here as the Beach Choir and the English Chamber Orchestra give the annual Good Friday service at the Birmingham Cathedral of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. The choir's new man at the helm, David Hill, conducts.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only □ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

THE GIN GAME: Dorothy Tutin and Joss Ackland play old folk in a retirement home whose card-playing styles echo their real lives. Fritha Bancroft directs a surprising Pulitzer Prize-winner (see review, p. 37, Savoy 0171-836 8881).

THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE: Richard Dreyfuss and Marsha Mason make their British stage debut in Neil Simon's play about city angst. Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-900 1300).

EL GOON: C P Taylor's best play, tracing a liberal professor's gradual descent into working with the Nazis. Charles Dance heads a strong cast. National Theatre (0171-739 5000).

CARD BOYS: Even the rats who stick set cards in phone boxes have dreams of bettering themselves. Mike Packer's playful comedy tells us. Bush (0181-743 3368).

400 JOKES WITH THE DEVIL: This is Theatre Alibi's young account



Lynne Dawson sings with the SCO in Glasgow

Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333).

GLASGOW: Soprano Lynne Dawson and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Chorus in Chausson's mournful *Poème de l'amour et de la mort*, preceded by a Faure suite. A Mendelssohn finale provides a counterweight to the all-French programme. Raymond Leppard conducts. City Hall (0141-287 5511). Tonight, 7.30pm.

WOLVERHAMPTON: Tim Brooke-Taylor and Brian Murphy are members of the hopeless gang created by Alan Gray in *The Layabouts*. Grand (01922 42212). Tonight, 7.30pm.

Grotesque and yet gorgeous

Richard Jones's poetic, enchanting, horrifying – in other words all-embracing – production of Humperdinck's fairy-tale for Welsh National Opera was given a warm if somewhat nervous welcome by Hilary Finch when it was new in Cardiff at Christmas. Children, apparently, happily take it in their stride; they probably watch more television than adults. I suspect that the older you are, the more disturbing you may find it.

Anyway, audiences are funny things. When Nigel Robson's dear little old lady of a Witch skewered medieval Drumlin's *Hansel* on a broomstick, bound hand and foot like a sucking pig complete with an apple – gag! – in his mouth, and then forced him through a tube, Wednesday's audience was falling about laughing, while this particular member of it was halfway under his seal in sheer terror. That is the climax of gruesomeness in the staging, unless you count the rescued children enthusiastically setting down to eat the Witch at curtain-fall. But it is balanced by imagery of extraordinary wonder and tenderness: the Dream Pantomime, with angel-chefs and a Max Ernst fish Butler serving the children the banquet of a lifetime. Is a truly Mahlerian child's vision of heaven.

Which, despite the brilliance of the production, leads to perhaps the most riveting aspect of the evening: the musical performance under Vladimir Jurowski. The Russian conductor writes most interestingly in the programme of his initial doubts about the piece, of the technical difficulty in realising the "unbelievably intricate" polyphony, and of the somewhat suffocating Wagnerism. He feels the

OPERA

Hansel and Gretel Saddler's Wells

need somehow to get beyond all that, and indeed does get beyond it, into the world of Mahler.

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He also mentions the gruesomeness, but not that other Teutonic element, the *Genüttlichkeit*: Robson's Witch oozes with it, old-world charm as synthetic as the cream on the chocolate cake that lures the children into his/her lair. His singing is musical and unexaggerated, as is that of the whole cast: Linda Kitchen and Imelda Drumm Irresistible as the children, Mary Lloyd-Davies and Robert Poulton hugely sympathetic as the despairing parents, and Mary-Louise Atkin exceptionally as Sandman and Dew Fairy. Musically this is a feast as rich as Jones' Dream Pantomime and in combination with the piece, of the technical difficulty in realising the "unbelievably intricate" polyphony, and of the somewhat suffocating Wagnerism. He feels the

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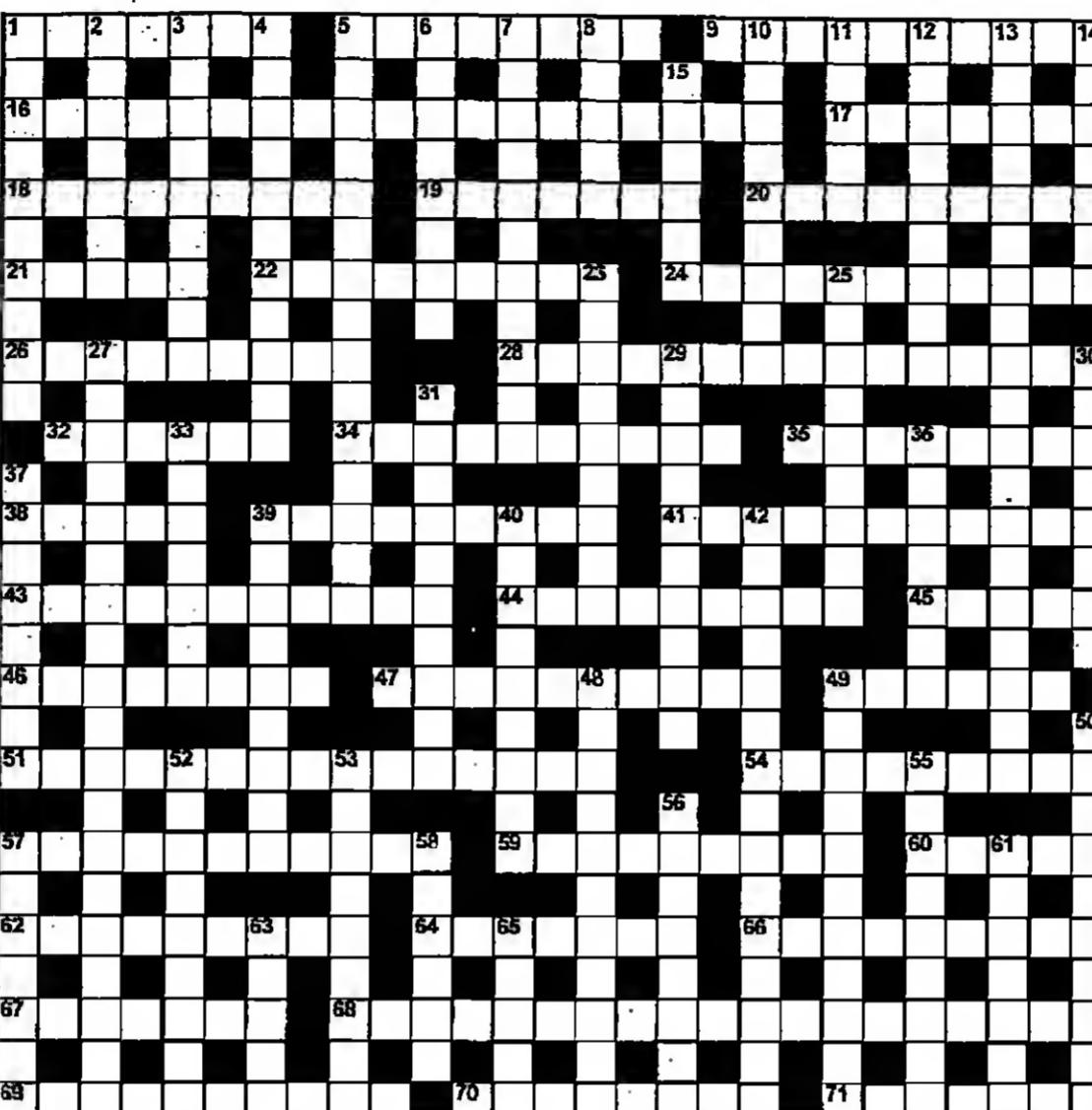
ACROSS

- 1 Swelling seas sadly drowning e.g. geology graduate (7)
2 Piece on Communist reported shot (8)
3 Items of furniture with gold inlay provided for naval officers (10)
4 Must one have spelling lessons? (9,10)
7 Sickness seen in Paradise as exceptional? (7)
18 Come back together possibly once? Never! (9)
19 Going wrong first to last in period of opportunity? (7)
20 Sellers of War Cry look on, facing obstacle in post part of pub (6,3)
21 Sound of feline animal in sandy terrain near Ayr? (5)
22 Feature of dress in which little Mary appears before the Queen (9)
24 Underline number (11)
26 Diligent couple, American, behind foot, initially ignorant (9)
28 Being trivious, she dated English drink (5-10)
32 Indian companion brought in for child-minding facility (6)
34 Loiter? Sure could be possibility if ones this (10)
35 Clear and concise dictionary isn't badly laid out inside (8)
36 Humble learner meets wise-looking person by back of academy (5)
39 Financial document shows heap given to debtor getting behind (4,5)
41 Possibly he is achiever having caught cold — bacteria responsible (11)
43 Ben may provide me with a challenge (11)
Inspect learner's room — find research analysis (4,5)
44 Material left out to accommodate bits near Julie's middle (5)
Religious wonder-worker wants nothing Catholic to be carried around (8)
Child who could be one of Fa-mous Five? (10)
Boldness shown by heartless sweetheart (6)
Place at which all hope must be abandoned — always Rome? (3,3,2,3,4)
Explorer earns sums after travelling around (9)
Rambling screed with no end should be shortened again (11)
Outburst when Mrs Mopp comes in to get extra payment (9)
60 Raccoon-like animal, one hiding behind garment (5)
Fresh soup, meat — around end of dinner, cheese (9)
64 Folly making mother return to supposed site of monster (7)
66 Form of script including, primarily, emporium's latest information? (5,4)
67 A mother with energy that's remarkable (7)
68 Following Rapunzel's example and behaving wildly (7,4,4)
69 Folk crossing, going in and out of stations? (10)
70 Peg, dram, a litre? Wanting none of them! (8)
71 Last stages of battle with only a few left on board? (3-4)

DOWN

- 1 A superior street artist, one in short narrow road on a far continent (10)
2 One physically wounded in the Middle East — hurry into hospital (7)
3 Immortal bird is diving into rising river (9)
4 It helps one to look at things in different ways (11)
5 Teacher in lab's second degree? (6,2,7)
6 Solid figure ousting male involved in true act of retaliation (8)
7 Bad sort, no good, has secure places to hide in (11)
8 Grandma heads north for Scottish location (5)
10 Is article on church supporting honour and attitude of defiance? (9)
11 Gong brings first of dimers into dinner maybe (5)
12 Second little woman at home keeping lady and man apart, separated (9)
13 Enjoy book on train, perhaps, and find writer's hidden meaning (4,7,3,5)
14 Those that are fleeced may see him go off with the spoils (7)
15 One when resting, it seems, may be bent (6)
23 Controls engineers put on barriers around centre of Hull (9)
25 Expertise in home delivery (9)
27 Finds the bottle warmer has to drink wrinkling nose over spirit? (6,2,4,7)
29 Fabric shreds everyone stitched together (10)
30 Placed in difficulty, I ate dust (8)
31 Vessel out East in a passage heavy with traffic (5,5)
33 Like this puzzle? It could make you weep quietly a short while (7)
36 Rogue may be one to sweep through on a path of destruction (7)
37 Fruit fly possibly bigger than all the others? (8)
39 Edge, something rocky, suits butterfly (9)
40 A concert's organised for singers (9)
42 Board favouring friend, entertaining very big alternative suggestion? (7-8)
48 Thin as office papers may be? (11)
49 A sediment is stirred, becoming diffuse (11)
50 Firmness in little girl, 10, only half nice (10)
52 Is son nice? That could be changed, if heredity becomes such (3-6)
53 Experimenter who risks being brought down to earth (4,5)
55 Relation, a left-winger, not exonerated (9)
56 This horse may be a joke (8)
57 In anger, a member of the House may show violent behaviour? (7)
58 Fabric not bright it having only minimal yellow (6)
61 Song about unknown old knight getting in a state (7)
63 Fellow, cad, not accepted by nob, right? (5)
65 Urge production of endless gibberish (5)

In our Bank Holiday Jumbo Crossword competition, a prize of £100 will be awarded for the first correct solution to be opened on Thursday, April 22.
Entries to Good Friday Jumbo (217), Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.
The winner and solution will be published in Weekend on Saturday, April 24



NAME

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Law Report April 2 1999

Chancery Division

No right to sue on grape names

Antonio Muñoz Y Cia SA and Another v Frumar Ltd and Another

Before Mr Justice Laddie
Judgment March 26

No recital in the relevant EEC Council Regulations, relating to the identification of grapes, had the effect of enabling a plaintiff, owning property rights in a particular strain, in sue a defendant who marketed that strain under a different name.

Mr Justice Laddie so held in the Chancery Division, in dismissing an action by the plaintiffs, Antonio Muñoz Y Cia SA and Superior Fruñola SA, against Frumar Ltd and Redbridge Produce Marketing Ltd, in which Muñoz sought, inter alia, to enjoin Frumar from selling "Superior Seedless" grapes under the names "White Seedless", "Sult" or "Coryn".

Those Council Regulations, made with the objectives set out in article 39 and under article 42 and 43 of the EC Treaty, were Regulations 103/72/EEC (OJ 1972 L18/72, 82/387/EEC (OJ 1987 L54/59, 17/80/EEC (OJ 1987 L163/25, 29/92/EEC (OJ 1992 L31/29, 208/92/EEC (OJ 1992 L26/7) and 220/96/EEC (OJ 1996 L297/1).

Mr Martin Howe, QC and Miss Charlotte May for Muñoz; Mr Mark Plattis Mills, QC, for Frumar.

MR JUSTICE LADDIE said that Muñoz held exclusive rights to grow and harvest in Spain "Superior Seedless" grapes ("SS"), a strain developed in the 1980s by Superior Fruñola Inc of USA, under a Spanish patent.

Muñoz sold seedless grapes in the United Kingdom under the names "White Seedless", "Sult"

and "Coryn". Recent DNA tests on "Coryn" grapes had led Frumar to accept that they were "SS" and after the first day of trial it had told Muñoz that it was, for the purpose of this action only, willing to accept that both "White Seedless" and "Sult" also were "SS".

Nevertheless Frumar contended that nobody could be sure what "SS" were, that DNA tests were too complicated to be within its reasonable reach, that it wished to cross-examine Muñoz's expert witness, that the regulations were insufficiently transparent to be enforceable and that it had at all times acted with due diligence.

Just before Frumar's expert witness was due to give evidence, he and his report had been withdrawn. Two major issues had remained:

J Did the relevant Council Regulations make the use of the variety name mandatory in relation to fruit's grapes?

In His Lordship's view, the regulations required that any grape which was put on the market must bear its proper variety name, or its synonym, if that was listed. It followed that the only legitimate name which could have been used on Frumar's strains was "SS".

Article 30 of Regulation 2200/96 imposed upon Frumar, as holders of those products, a duty to label them properly. They had failed that duty.

2 Had Muñoz any right to sue in respect of those breaches?

European Regulations differed from ordinary English legislation in that recitals, often extensive, were set out, in order to identify the major considerations to be borne in mind and addressed; sometimes giving a much clearer indication of the legislative intent.

Here, the right to sue depended on:

(a) the extent to which, if at all, these regulations had direct effect; namely, could a private individual rely on them in the courts of member states, even if not implemented into the member's national legislation?

(b) whether that effect was "vertical", creating rights enforceable in the national courts between individuals and the State, or "horizontal", creating enforceable rights between individuals?

Mr Howe's main authorities fell into two groups. Spanish Whisky Association v Glen Kelso Distillers Ltd [1997] Eu LR 446, Scotch Whisky Association v Glen Kelso Distillers Ltd [1997] Eu LR 453 and *Martinez Gago & Sons Ltd v Welsh Distillers Ltd* [1998] FSR 718, each concerned with EEC Regulation 1576/89 (OJ 1989 L160/1).

It is clear that the Spanish

and "Coryn". Recent DNA tests on "Coryn" grapes had led Frumar to accept that they were "SS" and after the first day of trial it had told Muñoz that it was, for the purpose of this action only, willing to accept that both "White Seedless" and "Sult" also were "SS".

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Just before Frumar's expert witness was due to give evidence, he and his report had been withdrawn. Two major issues had remained:

J Did the relevant Council Regulations make the use of the variety name mandatory in relation to fruit's grapes?

In His Lordship's view, the regulations required that any grape which was put on the market must bear its proper variety name, or its synonym, if that was listed. It followed that the only legitimate name which could have been used on Frumar's strains was "SS".

Article 30 of Regulation 2200/96 imposed upon Frumar, as holders of those products, a duty to label them properly. They had failed that duty.

2 Had Muñoz any right to sue in respect of those breaches?

European Regulations differed from ordinary English legislation in that recitals, often extensive, were set out, in order to identify the major considerations to be borne in mind and addressed; sometimes giving a much clearer indication of the legislative intent.

Solicitors: Hewitson Becke & Shaw, Cambridge; Cheyne Goulding, Guildford.

Mr Howe had relied upon the recitals in two each of Regulations Nos 1035/72 and 2200/96, but all were very different from the recitals in the Whisky and Elderflower Campaign cases and none, whether taken alone or in conjunction with others, went anywhere near suggesting that one of the legislative objects behind them was the creation of rights enforceable by customers or individual traders.

Their objective was not to protect any particular goodwill, but to ensure that grapes reached the market in good condition and that customers were told what they were getting: a conclusion reinforced by analysis of the rest of their provisions.

Mr Howe had pointed out that quality standards could be enforced in the UK by the Horticultural Marketing Inspectorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and that this missed the point.

The inspectorate's remit, and doubtless that of equivalent other bodies abroad, was not to advance any one trader's interest but to ensure and police suitable customer protection measures.

So although Muñoz had acted correctly in complaining about the mis-marking of its products and in asking the inspectorate to intervene, the inspectorate's failure to do justly not justify the creation of any new right enforceable by Muñoz.

In the result, Muñoz's action failed: but since Frumar had lost on every single factual issue fought, his Lordship would order Frumar to pay to Muñoz 25 per cent of its costs of the action.

MR JUSTICE LINDSAY said that in June 1974 Mrs Cameron executed a will in which the whole of her net estate was divided into four equal shares, one each absolutely for her four sons Donald, Iain, Alastair and Hamish.

In 1979 Mrs Cameron was diagnosed as having a condition which caused a progressive deterioration in her mental capacity. She executed an enduring power of attorney under which Alastair, Hamish and Iain were jointly appointed to be her attorneys with general authority to act on her behalf in relation to her property and affairs.

In January 1991 an educational trust was established by the attorneys for the benefit of Donald's son Jamie. It was the intention of the attorneys that that provision would be taken into account when calculating his share in the residue of his mother's estate.

After Mrs Cameron's death in 1992, Donald contended that a lifetime gift made without his consent or knowledge for Jamie could not be taken into account when calculating his share of the residue. The executors then issued an original

In re the Estate of Marjorie Langdon Cameron (Deceased)

Before Mr Justice Lindsay
Judgment March 24

Where a testatrix made a lifetime gift to her son's child if gift fairly be seen as intended for the substantial benefit of the son, that gift partially revoked the son's share in the testatrix's estate. The lifetime gift to the child, made on the testatrix's behalf pursuant to an enduring power of attorney, was a valid exercise of that power.

Mr Justice Lindsay so held in the Chancery Division when determining questions raised by the plaintiff, Peter David Phillips, executor of the estate of Marjorie Langdon Cameron and the first defendant.

Alastair Cameron, Hamish Cameron and Iain Hugh Craig Cameron were the second to fourth defendants respectively.

Section 3 of the Enduring Power of Attorney Act 1985 provides:

"(4) ... an attorney under an enduring power ... [may] act under the power so as to benefit himself or other persons other than the donor to the extent ... (a) if he may so act ... if the donor might be expected to provide for his or that person's needs ... and (b) if he may do whatever the donor might be expected to do to meet those needs."

That was the legacy to Donald in Mrs Cameron's will, which provided for his sons education.

Moreover, the provision which the attorneys made on her behalf was of a kind which she might have been expected to make both to confer some benefit on Donald and to benefit the other three sons.

It was the legacy to Donald in Mrs Cameron's will, which provided for his sons education.

Despite the long use of the term "portion" in law, the word was not a term of art. It seemed that it was something given by the testator to the child and not a child of that child and not a child of the testator.

That was possible even where the provisions of the two portions differed even to the extent of the recipients being different. Accordingly, where both gifts were potentiality portions, a legacy to A might in some circumstances defeat by an inter vivos gift the recipient of which was B.

At least, that could be so where the difference between A and B in relation to the donor was merely a child and a child of that child and not a child of the testator.

Solicitors: Mills & Reeve, Norwich; Bell & Howe, Witham, Radcliffe.

No liability over common-sense task

defied what instructions should have been given, nor had the plaintiff been able to suggest any.

It was common ground that this was not a lifting case nor was it one that involved a system of work.

On the facts it was impossible to find negligence without ascertaining what the instructions should have been and it was difficult to see what possible instruction would have been relevant in a one-off situation where the plaintiff was doing something on his own initiative and when he should have been using his common sense.

Accordingly the appeal would be allowed.

Sir Stephen Brown delivered a concerning judgment.

There was authority for that in *Ex parte Pye* (1811) 18 Ves & Jun 140 where Lord Eldon spoke of a person in loco parentis being in the situation of the person described as the lawful father of the child.

However, in his Lordship's judg-

Times Two Good Friday Jumbo

There is no prize for this crossword. The solution will be published on Monday, April 5

ACROSS

- 1 Cause of annoyance, fear (7)
2 Laura his muse (8)
3 Glide between notes (mus) (10)
16 The Young Pretender (6,6,7)
17 Retirement garment (7)
18 Last few job candidates (9)
19 Neptune's weapon (7)
20 Historical record keeper (9)
21 Mark —, American author (5)
22 Repulsive (9)
24 In charming fashion (11)
26 Uncompromising type (9)
28 Indoor climate control (3-12)
32 Blunt needle (6)
34 Ledge by casement (6,4)
35 Capital of Brazil (8)
38 To oozes (5)
39 Improvised (eg road block) (9)
41 Play-mounting activities (11)
43 Sea-depth measure (4,7)
44 Causing sweat (9)
45 One fitting into mortise (5)
46 Period of 3 (8)
47 Unglazed earthenware (10)
49 Split apart; stick closely (6)
51 Sets of villains' portraits (6,9)
52 Collarbones (9)
57 Gallantry award; egged morale (anag) (6,5)
59 Carefully checking (9)
60 Banter; corn husks (5)
62 Is more important than (9)
64 Immuniser against disease (7)
66 Vital (9)
67 Lover of Isolde (7)
68 Unofficial therapies (11,8)
69 Older man generous to young girl (5,5)
70 Tent cover; handbill (8)
71 Lover of Ariadne (7)

DOWN

- 1 Child munder (10)
2 Venetian craft (7)
3 State of being (9)
4 Creation of copies (11)
5 Go out for great time (5,3,4,3)
6 Of few words (8)
7 Island chain (11)
8 Camb. college; Irish county (5)
10 Not using both arms (3-6)
11 Uniform coat (5)
12 Grande (9)
13 W. London summer festival (7,4,8)
14 In unconcealed way (7)
15 Cheerfully careless (6)
23 Turban-like knot (5,4)
25 Polar (continent) (9)
27 Surflet; what "one can't have" (3,4,2,1,4,5)
29 Utterly erase (10)
30 A London legal society (5,3)
31 Cold-weather radiator additive (10)
33 Israeli parliament (7)
36 Pin for knocking down (7)
37 One carousing (8)
39 Cheap, fake (goods) (9)
40 Fortright, boldly confident (9)
42 Admission to voting rights (15)
48 San Jose their capital (5,6)
49 (Police station) case list (6,5)
50 Value, benefit (10)
52 Kitchen whisk (3-6)
53 Personal servant (5,4)
55 Inducement (9)
56 One full of energy, enthusiasm (4,4)
57 Space between vocal cords (7)
58 Frivolousness (6)
61 Idiotic (7)
63 A city; a cake; a jib sail (5)
65 Marine animal; Ballantyne's Island (5)

Chancery Division

MARKETING

The making of a 'broadloid'



Former Sun Editor Stuart Higgins helped to launch a new Turkish paper designed to combine the qualities of a broadsheet and tabloid

Just as Posh Spice was about to deliver her son, little Brooklyn, I was involved in a gynaecological challenge of my own — helping to give birth to a Turkish daily morning newspaper, *The Star*.

Its delivery, too, was not without problems, but by 9am the following day a "sell-out" was triumphantly reported — good news, of course, but it also meant that we should have printed more than the 600,000 copies that rolled off the presses at seven print centres.

The TV-supported promotion — a free box of Pringles (worth £1.35) for every reader — helped, although the switchboard lit up with calls from angry readers who claimed that retailers were refusing to part with their crisps after they had paid their £30,000 lire (about 25p) for their newspaper.

The Star — the only Turkish-language newspaper with an English name published in Istanbul — was designed as a "broadsheet tabloid", with all the journalistic aggression of *The Sun* and *The Mirror* touched by humour, a distinctive and noisy political view of life and expansive use of great photos. Its daily rivals — *Milleyet*, *Hurriyet* and *Sabah* — all broadsheets and each selling just over 200,000 — are weighed down with pages of economic news and "deep news", as it translates for us Brits.

The idea was to break away from the traditional format and create a new market to lure tabloid-type readers, who like a constant, appealing blend of the light and dark, serious and humorous, throughout their newspaper rather than a "signposting" of designated areas that readers might visit and others that they

might ignore. I have tried to bring my *Sun* experience to the process, explaining how important it is that this new daily embrace its readers, luring them with a cocktail of great stories, inspirational writing, irresistible promotions and the best soccer coverage in town. (Given that only three of the editorial staff speak English, I am sure that my enthusiasm lost a little in the translation.) I ventured on with more ideas for attracting readers — setting up ways for them to participate via letters pages, e-mail addresses and fax lines to gauge reaction and provide partisan opinion on key issues. I slipped into stormy waters as I tried to explain to colleagues the principles behind the "You The Jury" poll, in which readers vote "yes" or "no" on a particular subject.

To illustrate the concept, I used a dummy page of *The Star* containing a photo of a near-naked lap-dancer sliding provocatively down a pole. I then suggested getting an outspoken columnist to declare: "This is disgusting and outrageous and should be banned." Then readers would be invited to vote on the issue: "Shall we ban lap dancing in Turkey?" One voice — in English — said: "I have a better idea. The question will be 'Shall we declare war on Greece?'". *The Star's* proprietor, Cem Uzan, was joking, but he had the right idea about how to catch readers' attention.

Turkish newspapers are obsessed with politics. But judging by the low circulations, the nation's 64 million population does not share their view. Turkey has 25 political parties with only subtle differences in their policies. The obsession is reflected in each newspaper, with up to eight columnists

pontificating each day on the minutiae of the actions of the Prime Minister, Bülent Ecevit, and the Ankara Government. Elections are due to be held on April 18.

The country is gripped by its own battles against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), which is fighting for an inde-

pendent Kurdish state, with car bombs placed indiscriminately in shopping centres and vowing revenge for the incarceration of its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, who was brought back from Kenya to Turkey to face trial for the deaths of some 30,000 people during the Kurdish insurgency.

On the eve of publication we sifted through the various *Blue Peter* splashes — ones we made earlier that would at least allow *The Star* to hit its 6.30pm printing deadline — but all were discarded when a car bomb exploded at lunchtime in the Carousel shopping

area. The Editor-in-Chief, Faith Çekirge, was ecstatic in the spontaneous way that only a newspaperman can be at such outrages. "We've got a front page," he announced. "Good job I fixed that bomb!" he added with a big smile, unaware that a man had died but absorbed with the all-consuming passion and decision-making demands that a big story creates in a newsroom, especially on a newspaper's first day of publication. His sense of relief at a breaking story was shared with the staff, who suddenly realised that they were in business and had to

produce a real newspaper. We compared the front pages the following day and, predictably, concluded that *The Star's* was by far the best because of the way the car bomb photo was used. The photographer, Kemal Onder, a veteran of 30 years, had quit another job to join *The Star* that morning and had been passing just as the bomb exploded. That was another cause for celebration. "It's a lucky day," said Faith.

The Turkish newspapers are, by British standards, usually a painbox of bright colours, which makes them difficult to read and sometimes confuses the reader as to which is the dominant story on the page. But they started using colour years before British newspapers and are often refreshingly unrestrained in their use of it, especially on the sports pages.

They were also swift to recognise the value of linking up with or establishing a partnership with their own television station. In the case of *The Star* it is Star TV, a perfect ally for cross-promotion and joint use of resources. It is also the growth of television that is blamed for keeping down newspaper circulations.

Price of Cleese failure

THREE ad agencies are licking their wounds after losing high-profile clients. Supermarket giant Sainsbury's has dismissed Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO for the failure of the John Cleese TV commercials by appointing M&C Saatchi to work on a new £25 million summer campaign. Marketing Week says AMV could lose another key account, Volvo, if the proposed takeover by Ford goes ahead. Bates Dorland has frozen directors' bonuses worth some £5 million after losing business from Heinz, Texaco and Compaq. And Campaign reports that Banks Hoggins O'Shea/RCB has axed 12 staff after losing the £9 million Kimberley-Clark account.

■ BEING business editor at *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday* is a short-term business. PR Week reports that Andrew Cornelius, who filled the role on the daily title, is leaving after eight months to return to PR agency Ciogate Dewe-Roger, while the Sunday paper's Patrick Weever has left after

TRADE

holding the job for less than a month.

■ A COMMERCIAL for Emap Metro's new magazine *Heart*, which showed its readers engulfed in flames, has been banned by the Independent Television Commission. Media Week reports that the ads, devised by Bartle Bogle Hegarty, attracted 318 complaints, including 53 from people who had been involved in fires and did not see the joke.

■ CHANGING FACES: Martin Rummel quits as Rover's top marketing man on eve of launch of the crucial 75 model (Marketing). Matt Tee, head of PR at Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital Trust, to be head of news at Dept of Trade and Industry (PR Week). Kirstie Milne, political editor of *Sunday Herald* in Glasgow, to freelance for *The Scotsman*. Jackie Newcombe steps down as publishing director of IPC's home interest titles (Press Gazette).

■ GETTING THE BUSINESS: Le Feuvre Communications wins PR contract for Lloyds TSB credit cards; Segal Europe appoints Bell Pottinger to run corporate press and PR (PR Week). TBWA GGT Simons Palmer wins account for Dr Martens first major advertising campaign (Campaign).

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

The dramatic first front page of *The Star*, the new Turkish-language, broadloid daily, and, right, the opposition

THE TIMES

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TOKEN COLLECTION REQUIRED

CHANGING TIMES

Anyone for the BBC's tennis?

HORRORS! Is the BBC about to lose its exclusive hold over Wimbledon? The television rights expire after this summer's tournament, and tension is running high.

After Easter the All England Lawn Tennis Club will invite potential broadcasters — Sky Television, ITV, Channel 4 — to pitch for a new contract that could run for up to five years. A nervous BBC has just pledged to extend broadcasts this summer and to provide cameras to an extra seventh court.

Two weeks ago its new free digital channel, BBC Choice, gave a demonstration to club executives about how it will screen extra matches and freshen up coverage alongside BBC1 and BBC2. Its chiefs are acutely aware that Channel 4 "snatched" Test cricket because the England and Wales Cricket Board fancied its innovative approach. The Government last year altered the protected "listed events" sporting rules. The Wimbledon finals, an "A" category listed event, could switch to a pay channel, but not pay-per-view; provided that extended access was also given to a free-to-air service.

The semi-finals are on a less important "B" list. The Government seems sanguine about some kind of mixed Sky and BBC deal if it meant the extra broadcasting money was dispensed among the grass roots — the Lawn Tennis Association gained £32 million last year from Wimbledon.

The BBC now screens only 150 hours out of 500 hours covered, but it acts as host broadcaster, sending on footage worldwide. "Although the BBC does a very good job, we can't

stand still," says Ian Edwards, the All England TV marketing director.

Quite a few dispassionate observers have told me in the past few weeks that the BBC's hold over Wimbledon is crumbling. A big headache for the new Director-General.

■ CHARLIE WHELAN. Gordon Brown's fallen spin-doctor, Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, have had a bit of a tiff. Banks is exceedingly displeased with last Sunday's front-page story in *The Observer* — where Whelan has a column — about a

scheme to give honours to the overlooked 1966 World Cup football winners Nobby Stiles, Gordon Banks and Martin Peters.

It appears that this was a discreet but behind-the-scenes hobby-horse of Tony Banks. Patrick Wintour, *The Observer's* political editor, was able to share it with the world, allowing the tabloids, led by *The Sun*, to take up the campaign enthusiastically. How did it turn up in *The Observer*? Well, Whelan and Wintour went to lunch.

The publicity is seen as a laissez faire to rule 10 Downing Street, where these honour decisions — in new Labour's way — are taken. Perhaps Banks should relax. *The Sun* can hardly be spurred.

Meanwhile, Whelan's media career expands as he joins Radio 5

Live's *Sunday Service* this weekend. It pitches him bang opposite rival spin-doctor Derek Draper on Talk Radio.

■ MUCH discussion about how the British Press Awards can redeem itself from the gutter. Even *The Guardian's* Hilton Hotel suite for party revellers became so noisy that the manager asked them to call it a night at 3.30am. One answer: it always used to be at lunchtime, with a finite end, as the next day's deadlines beckoned. At the *Press Gazette*, the event's organiser, there's been heart-searching but Philippa Kennedy, its new Editor, is understanding: "National newspaper journalists are thoroughbreds, at the top of their profession and highly competitive."

Kennedy says she has been flooded with apologies. Piers Morgan, the editor of *The Mirror*, "sent me the biggest bunch of flowers I've ever had".

My view? Apart from memorial services and awards ceremonies, national journalists rarely gather outside of their papers, en masse. Unlike broadcasting, there are no regular industry meeting places where ethics or trends are discussed. So throw 700 journalists, divided into tribal camps, into a hotel room with unlimited amounts of booze and you end up with drunken brawls.

■ SPOTTED: that svelte public relations doyenne, Julia Hobbs, back at work three days a week, showing off her baby snap to Amanda Platell at *The Observer's* packed-out spring party this week.

"Oh, you're so lucky," says Platell.

who remains completely unfazed by the furore surrounding her new appointment as William Hague's spin-doctor.

"It's my knowledge of how national newspapers really work that counts," she says.

■ I RECENTLY saw Geoffrey Robinson, the fallen Treasury Minister, acting as a commentator for *Sky News* on the Budget. I hear he's also expending surplus energy running the commercial side of his publishing empire, and the *New Statesman* is assuredly not up for sale. He also has a tendency to burst in with good ideas to the Editor, Peter Wilby — on Wednesdays, just as the magazine goes to press.

■ CHANNEL 4 rushed to welcome the performance review of its programming by the Independent Television Commission (ITC) this week. But privately I'm told that the ITC is "disappointed" at the slowness of Channel 4's Chief Executive, Michael Jackson, in bringing change. Observers believe he was thrown by Channel 4's lack of an in-house production base but put flesh on his ideas.

■ SIR JOHN BIRT is planning several high-profile events to remind people how he saved the BBC. One likely forum is a keynote speech to this autumn's Royal Television Society Convention in Cambridge. But surely it's an opportunity for a broadcaster to screen a big interview: Channel 4 ought to jump at it. By the way, Alan Yentob's call for quality BBC programming has gone down very well in political quarters. It's regarded as long overdue.

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MEDIA DIARY

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TUESDAY APRIL 6

WEDNESDAY APRIL 7

THURSDAY APRIL 8

FRIDAY APRIL 9

SATURDAY APRIL 10

SUNDAY APRIL 11

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THURSDAY APRIL 15

FRIDAY APRIL 16

SATURDAY APRIL 17

SUNDAY APRIL 18

MONDAY APRIL 19

TUESDAY APRIL 20

WEDNESDAY APRIL 21

THURSDAY APRIL 22

FRIDAY APRIL 23

SATURDAY APRIL 24

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SUNDAY MAY 1

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TUESDAY MAY 10

WEDNESDAY MAY 11

THURSDAY MAY 12

FRIDAY MAY 13

SATURDAY MAY 14

SUNDAY MAY 15

MONDAY MAY 16

TUESDAY MAY 17

WEDNESDAY MAY 18

THURSDAY MAY 19

FRIDAY MAY 20

SATURDAY MAY 21

SUNDAY MAY 22

MONDAY MAY 23

TUESDAY MAY 24

WEDNESDAY MAY 25

THURSDAY MAY 26

FRID

مكذا من الأصل

Kosovo, this is London calling

Their fellow countrymen may be locked in conflict, but a Serb and an Albanian are working closely at the BBC's Bush House to bring a vital news service to the war zone. Carol Midgley reports

Of the hundreds of journalists covering the conflict in Yugoslavia, few could claim as avid an audience as Julia Goga-Cooke and Alekse Zoric.

While neither can boast the notability of Kate Adie or John Simpson in this war, both are performing what could currently be described as two of the most anonymous but crucial jobs in the BBC.

While the conflict escalates, Goga-Cooke, an Albanian, and Zoric, a Serb, are working side by side in the bowels of Bush House, the London headquarters of the World Service.

In adjacent studios they and their staff now make eight broadcasts a day in Albanian and Serbian, providing for their audiences that most precious commodity of wartime — information.

With local media restricted by the Serb authorities (the independent Belgrade radio station B-92 has been closed down), the World Service is increasingly proving to be the only reliable source of information for all those people caught in the war zone who do not have access to satellite television.

Unlike the majority of journalists working on the story, however, Goga-Cooke, 42, and Zoric, 53, have a personal stake in the events. Many of their team of World Service journalists have friends and family scattered throughout the crisis zones.

A few days ago, one of the Albanian broadcasters at Bush House found himself having to announce the reported killing and obituary of Fehmi Agani, a Kosovo politician and negotiator whom he had known personally.

The team offered to get someone else to take over his broadcast but he insisted on going ahead with it. "I have cried my tears in private," he told Goga-Cooke, the Editor of the Albanian section. "I want to carry on and do my job." (Reports now indicate that Agani is, in fact, alive.)

The most difficult part of covering the war is worrying about the safety of journalists over there and the fact that some of our team have all their family in the middle of it," Goga-Cooke says. "Managing the

emotions and the worry has been our biggest problem. But you just get on with it."

Since the conflict in Kosovo began, the different sections at the World Service have worked as a team as their output has doubled. Information obtained separately by the Serbian, Albanian, Bulgarian and Macedonian journalists is pooled every day at the morning editorial meeting.

"We have very strong links," Goga-Cooke says. "I work closely with Alekse. It is very important that we exchange information. We are very close, co-operating round the clock. We were the first to get news of 170 refugees who arrived over the Albanian border on Saturday."

Zoric, 53, the Editor of the Serbian section, says: "The tone of our reports may be slightly different — we each put the accent on the interests of our audience — but we are sharing information.

"We are trying to convey that there is real suffering on both sides. If Albanian babies are crying because they are cold, Serbian babies may be crying because they are woken by the bomb blasts or the sirens. We know that some kids in Belgrade start vomiting when they hear the sirens."

Zoric moved with his American wife from Yugoslavia to London to work for the BBC in 1991, when the crisis began. He has a 27-year-old daughter who is a journalist in the United States and a son, 23, who lives in London. But his father, brother and sister-in-law are still living in Belgrade and going through the daily ritual of fleeing to shelters whenever the sirens are sounded.

Goga-Cooke has a 23-year-old son from her first marriage who lives in Albania and a daughter, 21, who is a student in Britain. A former English teacher and United Nations programme development worker, she moved to London in 1993 to work for the BBC's Albanian-language service. She has remarried and also has a 16-month-old daughter.

With such a sudden increase in their workload to contend with,

We try to
convey
that there
is suffering
on both
sides



Albanian children weep as they wait outside the registration centre in Skopje after being expelled from Kosovo. Below: Alekse Zoric and Julia Goga-Cooke

many of the team have found themselves literally working day and night. The broadcasts they produce can be picked up on short wave, on FM and through some local radio stations, such as Radio Prije in Macedonia, that have agreed to carry the World Service broadcasts. Many people also obtain information about the war from the World Service website.

The most difficult thing has been keeping our emotions out of it," Zoric says. "You have shared loyalty to your family, your country and your profession, but you want to present the facts accurately and impartially."

Most people in Yugoslavia, he says, have no real idea of what is happening in their country. "You know for a fact that they know nothing about what is going on in Kosovo, or that thousands of

Albanians are pouring over the border. They do not know about the actions of the Yugoslav Army. So we try to get as much actuality as we can in our reports.

"You cannot be completely unemotional or you sound artificial — you want to be balanced but you don't want to be cold."

There is also the danger of accepting spin as fact. The smallest mistake in a report can mean the difference between hope and utter despair for anxious listeners.

"Because of who our audience is and the sensitivity of the situation, we have to be so, so careful that we don't present claims as fact," Zoric says.

The BBC has the reputation of being a beacon of truth in war situations. So if you make a mistake, you destroy the credibility that has been built up over generations."



RICHARD CANNON

Breaks for the Border

Granada's tiny neighbour still has big plans, says Raymond Snoddy

Border Television has been called "Granada's pet lamb". It has also been pointed out that there are more sheep than people in the television region that covers areas on the border between England and Scotland, with the Isle of Man tacked on. And in an age of communication giants, Border appears to be an anachronism as the smallest independent ITV company apart from tiny Channel TV.

"Border has never been able to look in a mirror," says Jim Graham. "We have never understood that we are small. We have always had a bigger voice." Graham was a rugby league reporter for Border when it first went on air 38 years ago, before becoming managing director in 1982 after a spell at the BBC.

Even from the beginning, Border was seen as a risky anomaly. After the Granada, Scottish and Tyne Tees ITV licences had been awarded, there was a gap along the border. Sir John Burgess, the chairman of the local Cumbrian and Northumbrian Newspapers group, put together a consortium to bid for a licence.

Graham, now 65, believes that the Carlisle-based station makes a lot of social sense. "If you carry a story about a lifeboat in trouble in Berwick, they understand that in the Isle of Man and in Dumfries. They are a collection of people with similar interests and they all watch each other's stories," he says. But Border's big neighbour, Granada, is on the move again. It already controls everything to the south of Border. Now, how far will



SIMON BROOK-WEBB

Border TV's Jim Graham: "We have never understood that we are small"

about devolution will remain common to both English and Scottish sectors.

Border feels increasingly shut out of national programme-making, which is dominated by the big battalions such as Granada, Carlton and United. But religious programming has been developed as a speciality, and *Blessed Are They*, a television version of the Beatitudes, even won a medal at the International Film and Television Festival of New York. Graham talks in a rather old-fashioned but unconscious way of making programmes that "touch men's hearts and move men's minds".

Paul Corely, the chief executive, has brought a wider perspective to bear. This month it will introduce

rock and documentaries. But the company's biggest breakthrough has been its move into commercial radio, even winning a radio licence in Granada's Manchester heartland.

Tiny Border is now in the top ten of radio companies, with licences in Cumbria, the North East and the East Midlands as well as the North West. It also plans to seek a London digital licence in alliance with Chrysalis, the music and media group.

Can a broadcaster with a turnover of £12.8 million and pre-tax profits of £1.2 million last year manage to keep its independence? "I think it can survive," says Lord Bragg. "It serves its

area well and it's quite nice to

Stott the difference?

After last week's attack by Richard Stott, The Mirror Editor Piers Morgan defends his paper

For six years Richard Stott has simmered with rage about his sacking from the editorship of *The Mirror*. Only now has he chosen to make his vicious opinions public. He had absolutely nothing nice to say about anyone or anything except himself. But since he wishes to get personal, forgive me if I return the favour.

During his second and last term of editorship of *The Mirror* from March 1991 to November 1992, the sale of the paper collapsed by 256,000 copies, or 8.6 per cent.

Stott is mystified by David Montgomery's decision to fire him, insisting: "The paper was going well."

Well? I wouldn't like to see how it sold during a bad period. Is it possible, Richard, that your special brand of supposedly crusading, campaigning, we-love-all-things-Old-Labour politics was one of the biggest turn-offs to a newspaper readership? I understand his resentment at being fired. It's not happened to me yet, but I'm sure it's unpleasant. I do, though, find his remarks about *Mirror* managers filling their boots with cash a bit rich coming from a man who has had such large sums in pay-offs. Or did it all go to the mafias?

Tony Parsons, Quentin Wilson, Paul Routledge. Add the talents of James Whitaker, Matthew Wright, our *Sorted* investigators and the best feature writers and news reporters I've ever worked with.

As for our politics, we don't suck up to Labour so much any more. Stott made an art form out of it.

I know he briefs everyone from Alastair Campbell to Roy Greenslade on my political shortcomings. And I don't care. I have no problem with Labour. I enjoy regular harmonious meetings with Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and even Campbell seems to be drawing a bit despite his allegiance to Stott.

I do care about politics. I do believe in Tony Blair and I did vote Labour at the last election. I also believe *The Mirror* should be a critical friend and not a PR extension of No 10. Our readers know that our heart and soul still lies behind Labour and always will.

Stott ends his article by asking who can make *The Mirror* sing again. Readers of *The Times* will have been left in no doubt that there is only one candidate — Richard Stott. But the truth is that *The Mirror* is singing again, only to a different song-sheet.

Life has moved on, Richard. We are not the bitter, cynical, ranting Labour PR sheet that you put out most days. Nor do I edit the paper from any bar I can find at lunchtime. Nor is *The Mirror* losing readers any more, the way you lost them.

According to ABC circulation figures *The Mirror* sold 0.7 per

the
media
interview

And now it's Miami spice

The Spice Girls' former Svengali is back with a new group — and they can even act. Chris Ayres reports on the band and their upcoming TV show

Ever since the Spice Girls employed their famous Giri Power to get rid of Simon Fuller as manager — with an estimated £15 million payoff — the pop music supremo has been rather quiet. All that will change next Thursday when Fuller launches his latest act, described as a "19th-century version of The Monkees", complete with their own 13-episode BBC1 television series.

The seven-piece act, with the unlikely name of S Club 7, is one of the most ambitious cross-media entertainment projects launched so far in Britain. They even have a mawkish slogan to match that of Giri Power: "Everybody is a Somebody."

Fuller calls S Club 7 "a new concept in youth culture". What he really means, however, is a new concept in youth marketing: the aim of S Club 7 is to capitalise simultaneously on several different markets, taking in television, music, the Internet and fashion.

Those close to Fuller say that he has spent the past two years searching for a collection of multi-talented young people to launch a modern-day version of The Monkees, the American pop group launched in the Sixties with their own TV show. Fuller is said to have become frustrated with the Spice Girls' lack of all-round ability, in particular their limited acting skills (documented in horrific detail in *Spiceworld — The Movie*).

In contrast, the members of S Club 7 all have proven acting ability. Given their ages — between 16 and 22 years old — they also have impressive CVs. Tina Barrett, for example, is a former *Top of the Pops* dancer, while Jon Lee played the part of Josh in *EastEnders* for two years.

After finding the right people to form S Club 7, 37-year-old Fuller teamed up with the BBC and Initial TV — the production company partly owned by Guardian Media Group that makes *The Pepsi Chor* and *The Brit Awards* — to help to launch the project. Christopher Pilkington, an executive producer at Initial, says: "I was interested to see if S Club 7 could play out a comedy script. I took it for granted that they could perform their music. It soon became clear that they were head and shoulders above the competition. Needless to say, they were all also drop-dead gorgeous."

The TV series starring the band, *Miami 7*, will go air at 8.10pm — peak time for children's viewing. The story follows a naive young band that cannot get gigs in the UK, so their despairing manager sends them to

Miami where, he says, they will go down a storm. Instead, they end up having to take on menial jobs just to pay for their rooms in a seedy old hotel. To make matters worse, the hotel manager steals their passports and forces them to perform naff cover versions to entertain his guests.

All sounds rather familiar, but Pilkington insists that it will be "a fantastic hit with our target audience". He has certainly taken no chances with the writing team: it includes Fuller's brother Kim, whose previous writing credits include *Spiceworld — The Movie*, *Red Dwarf* and *Spitting Image*; and Jenji Cohan, who has written for *Friends* and *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*.

The series will run for several weeks before the first S Club 7 single — expected to be titled *Bring It On Back* — is released in early June. Interestingly, the song will be released

on the Polydor label (a British subsidiary of Universal Music in the US) instead of through EMI, the Spice Girls' record company. One music industry source says an album of 12 or 13 songs will be released after two singles. The album will "cover a range of styles, underscored by an optimistic, up-tempo, Jackson Five gang feel". Fuller chose the music with Lucien Grainge, the managing director of Polydor.

Ajax Scott, the Editor of *Music Week*, the industry's main trade magazine in the UK, is one of the few people to have heard the album. He describes it as "contemporary pop of the highest order".

"Without the other elements it would do well," he says. "With them, and backed by the well-oiled, hit-breaking machine that is Polydor, it looks next to impossible that it will fail."

Already Fuller is planning his S Club 7 media blitz. It is understood that there are already plans for a film, an Internet membership club and, of course, plenty of sponsorship deals.

It is not yet clear what plans S Club 7 have for entering the fashion world, but a range of branded clothing seems an obvious option.

And if Fuller's career with the Spice Girls is anything to go by, he can expect to collect a fat royalty from S Club 7's activities for several years — before being fired by the band and collecting a multimillion-pound payoff.

By then, of course, various members of S Club 7 could have left the band, become United Nations' special ambassadors, released successful solo singles or have become pregnant.

Well, that's showbusiness.

S Club 7 is in fact a new concept in youth marketing



Tanned band: British pop outfit S Club 7 eke out an existence in a Florida hotel in the TV series *Miami 7*

Dyke gets a nod to go for D-G job

Greg Dyke, Chairman and Chief Executive of Pearson Television, is pushing ahead with his bid to become Director-General of the BBC. He has allowed his name to go forward to the next stage of the selection process that formally began last week.

Dyke, a multimillionaire as a result of a share scheme from his days as managing director of London Weekend Television, has been encouraged to go ahead with his bid by both Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC Chairman, and Downing Street. If there had been discouraging noises from either quarter he would not have allowed his name to go forward.

The Conservatives have made it clear they will make a Dyke candidacy a political issue because he contributed an estimated £12,000 to pay for the private office of Tony Blair before the last election. Dyke, however, made it clear that he has never made political contributions as a broadcaster and no payments will be made if he becomes Director-General.

If there is a row, Downing Street will point out that Sir Christopher had his term extended by Mr Blair even though he was chairman of the Conservative Bow Group when first appointed Chairman of the BBC.

If Dyke, who is also a non-executive director of Manchester United, were to become D-G, it would mean halving his present salary. Pearson's annual report published two days ago showed that Dyke had a total pay package of £768,000 last year. This included a one-off bonus of £275,000 in Pearson shares, which have to be held for three years but can be retained if he leaves Pearson.

The hopes of another aspirant for the BBC job, David Elstein, Chief Executive of Channel 5, seem to be fading. Elstein, the former director of programmes at Thames Television and Sky, did not submit a formal application by last Friday's deadline, although he made it clear in the past that he wanted the job.

It is believed that Elstein has not yet been contacted by headhunters involved in the selection process. Backers have argued that the BBC desperately needs Elstein's knowledge of multichannel TV for an increasingly competitive age. Industry observers suggest that it might have been better tactics for the Channel 5 Chief Executive to submit a formal application rather than waiting for the phone to ring.

His chances will not have been helped by the Independent Television Commission criticising the "tackiness" of some of Channel 5's late night soft-porn shows and the lack of original drama apart from the soap *Family Affairs*. Ironically, Dyke is the Chairman of Channel 5. Other candidates for D-G are Mark Byford, Chief Executive of BBC World Service; Matthew Bannister, Chief Executive of BBC Production; Tony Hall, Chief Executive of BBC News; and Richard Eyre, ITV Chief Executive.

RAYMOND SNODDY

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THE TIMES



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Today The Times, in association with the Virgin One account, offers readers the chance to win a lovely cottage in the typical Cornish village of Perranwell Station. Smyth Cottage, with its two bedrooms and pretty garden, is the ideal holiday home. Close to Truro and an 18-hole golf course, our prize cottage will provide the lucky winner with the perfect place from which to watch the eclipse of the sun on August 11.

HOW TO ENTER Collect 12 Times tokens and two tokens from The Sunday Times and attach them to an entry form which appears again on Tuesday. Tokens will appear up to April 18 and a bonus token is published every Friday, April 30, 1999. Normal Times newspaper prize draw rules apply. The terms and conditions will appear again tomorrow.



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CHANGING TIMES

ITV runs out of excuses

THE Independent Television Commission (ITC) was rather kind to ITV in its annual review of the performance of the commercial broadcasters this week. Unless there is considerable improvement this year, the regulatory body should not make that mistake again.

The ITC, which specialises in exhortation rather than censure as long as the terms of licences have not been broken, gave ITV a generous eight out of ten for its output in 1998. ITV's determination to "refresh and revitalise" its service in 1998 was praised and no one could complain about such a judgment.

But you don't have to burrow deeply into the text to find disturbing things about how a system that raises around £2.6 billion in annual revenue sets about producing a high-quality, diverse schedule.

Year after year, the ITC notes, the apparent ITV belief that *The South Bank Show*, with its all-inclusive view of the arts — from Wayne Sleep's 50th birthday to Will Self — is enough arts thank-you.

Last year the ITC criticised ITV — not for the first time — for meeting its commitment on arts programming with undistinguished late-night arts entertainment shows. And this year?

"Once again the schedule was padded out with cheap, late-night material, this time programmes of movie clips and pop videos. This is not acceptable," says the ITC. Indeed not. But when is the ITC going to do something about such a flagrant abuse of the system?

How about education? Last year the ITC commented on a further narrowing of the educational agenda with excessive concentration on daytime leisure topics.

The ITC rather kindly noted 1998 was a year of transition in ITV current affairs.

What this meant was that *Big Story* was not re-commissioned, 3-D had only a short run and *World in Action* came to an end to be replaced by a new magazine programme from Granada. Before it went *World in Action* left no stone unturned investigating bad hotels, the contents of dog food — and a documentary on the Nairobi bombing aftermath.

The ITC says, rather plaintively, that it wishes to see the proportion of international material higher in 1999. If ITV had not been able to reply on the *We Can Work It Out* series, which will not be accepted under the current affairs classification this year, the average current affairs would have been 1 hour 25

minutes a week, the lowest on record. If you add up all of ITV's inadequacies and prevarications, it is a disgrace. After giving it the freedom to move *News at Ten*, the ITC, if it is to retain its credibility, has to insist on a more comprehensive performance from ITV.

■ THOSE who complained that the BBC was pulling the wool over the eyes of the public and MPs when parliamentary programmes were dropped from Radio 4 FM or moved were right all along. When *Yesterday in Parliament* was dropped as a segment of the *Today* programme and dispatched to longwave, it was in the face of the disquiet from Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker of the House of Commons.

The results are in. According to the BBC's own figures, the weekly reach of *Yesterday in Parliament* has declined from 3.13 million in 1997 to 330,000 in 1998. Parliamentary coverage is also down by 20 per cent. Helpfully, the BBC notes that only 84 per cent of the population has access to longwave.

The loss of reach to *Yesterday in Parliament* is broadly in line with the BBC's assessment in 1997: the corporation says in its *Review of Parliamentary Broadcasting*: "I can't remember the BBC making that assessment public at the time. The emphasis then was on expansion of parliamentary broadcasting because the programmes that fewer people would hear would last longer. The move of *The Week in Westminster* from Saturday morning to Thursday evenings has also had predictable consequences. The reach is now 227,000 compared with 658,000 in its Saturday slot."

YEAR ON YEAR OUTSIDE ADVERTISING GROWTH EXPENDITURE

	1998
OUTDOOR & TRANSPORT	0.7
TV	1.5
RADIO	6.9
NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS	-1.2
REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS	-1.8
CONSUMER MAGAZINES	-0.5
BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINES	-2.5
TOTAL	-0.2

All figures at current prices. 1999 data are projections

Source: Outdoor Advertising Association

In Kiev they fine a journalist \$1m and cut off all the phones

Journalists are facing increasing curbs on press freedom in Russia and its breakaway states — but trying to overcome the system is dangerous. Michael Foley reports

There is a monument outside Moscow's Central House of Journalists depicting a Soviet newsman wearing a military uniform, high boots and a cap. He has a camera slung round his neck and holds a notebook with pencil poised. It is dedicated to all the journalists who covered the Great Patriotic War.

The figure looks ahead at the snow settles on his notebook, military cap and moustache. His role is to bring honour and glory to the motherland and the Communist Party. Today few journalists are certain of a wage, let alone a status. Even the restaurant at the Central House, formerly a meeting place for writers and journalists, has been closed out. Few members can afford to eat in it now.

None of this gloom is enough to stop a celebration, though, and the Russian Union of Journalists recently organised a conference and a number of receptions to celebrate its 80th anniversary. More than 200 delegates from journalists' unions throughout Russia and central Asia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic countries attended. They came from Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. They included the associations that have sprung up to represent journalists who are working in the new and small independent media and who are fighting for press freedom.

The leaders of the old unions are survivors. Some were members of the Communist Party; in its new incarnation, the same party is calling for tighter control of the media. The older journalists are nostalgic for the time when they were certain of their role and of a good income. Now they call for press freedom and are linked to international organisations that were on the other side during the Cold War.

But while the leadership was celebrating the survival of its union, even if as a shadow of its former Soviet self — the membership is half what it was — there was little else to commend. Seven years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there is little press freedom.

From Kazakhstan to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Belarus and Ukraine, the story is a dismal one: tax laws are used to harass financially; there is a body of laws forbidding insults of those in high places; compulsory registration of the media is common. Many speakers related the appalling state of press freedom in their countries. And just

to show that elections, or what passes for them, are bad for journalists, several who work with state-run news agencies in Kazakhstan reported that they were warned against writing stories critical of President Nursultan Nazarbayev in the campaign leading to the January 10 elections.

Outside the institute journalists take two or more jobs to survive, but the mafia are taking money, and flash foreign cars drove mafia through the city. With elections looming, human rights groups and journalists believe that press freedom is getting worse and that President Leonid Kuchma is moving closer to that ground occupied by President Aleksandr Lukashenko of neighbouring Belarus.

Journalists working in Minsk, the Belarus capital, fare worse than any in the former Soviet republics. President Lukashenko, a former collective farm manager, is largely shunned and cannot gain entry into the Council of Europe, a body that will embrace Turkey, Croatia and Ukraine. Independent newspapers are harassed and the biggest, *Svoboda*, has to be printed in Vilnius, in Lithuania.

There is little or no investment in the independent press. Only 1 per cent of the economy is in the private sector and in 1997 total foreign investment was only \$40 million. The electronic media is almost all state-owned and the print media has to use state-owned printing plants where it is at the mercy of the authorities, as it is in its dealings with the state-run distribution system.

Sometimes one is left with the impression that Lukashenko is playing with the press. There is no doubt he could close it down if he chose; he prefers, instead, simply to make it a misery.

The most recent case of harassment was of the Belarusian newspaper *Nasha Niva*, which was warned that it had violated press and media laws by deviating from the accepted form of spelling and punctuation. It was using a form common in the 1920s until it was banned by Stalin. The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the paper, but the chairman of the Committee on the Press, Mikhail Padagin, has filed a complaint and a request that the court revoke its decision.

Back in Russia, the economic crisis has hit journalists in different ways. Regional newspapers have had to withdraw Moscow correspondents because of the costs. Some say this has placed them even more firmly under the thumb of the local authorities. Journalists are

Taking note of the changes: a statue of a Soviet reporter at the Central House of Journalists in Moscow

also more willing to write pieces about local politicians or business interests in return for a fee. "It's easy to be ethical when you're paid a wage," one said when Western journalists expressed horror.

Newspapers are now more relevant and have started to write "how to survive" stories. The number of titles has fallen, but total sales have increased. For the first time since the end of the Soviet Union people are buying newspapers because they are important to their lives.

The "least bad situation" is in Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova, says Simonov. It is getting worse in Ukraine which, like Kazakhstan,

seems to be closing media ranks with Belarus, Turkmenistan. He adds, is the worst case. In Armenia there is a free press, of sorts, but there are no laws; in Azerbaijan, there is one-man rule and little room for press freedom.

● Michael Foley is a media commentator at the Irish Times and a lecturer in journalism at the Dublin Institute of Technology. This is an extract from *Word Power, published by Index on Censorship*. £8.99: 0171-278 2313.

Give the red-tops a sporting chance

Was Neil Wallis, the Editor of the *Sunday People*, right in his ran against the judges of the British Press Awards, protesting forcefully from all accounts, that there was a bias against the journalism of the red-top tabloids?

Almost certainly. Slam-bang, straight-in-your-face, star-burst journalism, no matter how popular with readers, is less likely to appeal to a panel of distinguished journalists, even one that includes former tabloid editors, than a beautifully crafted piece presented with clever understatement.

"But before Wallis launches into his next outrage, I ask that he look not too far from under his own nose and consider whether the red-tops, including his own, are really that interested in honours."

I have just chaired two panels of judges of the British Sports Journalism Awards, which have been running for 26 years and are supported by the Sports Writers' Association and Sport England, the new title of the English Sports Council. Of the five winners of the BSJA categories open to journalists on national papers, two were from *The Mirror*, two from *The Sunday Telegraph* and one from *The Times*. That clearly reflects where many of the best sports stories appeared last year in *The Mirror* and *The Sunday Telegraph* and where the best and/or most significant writing occurred (the sports editor of *The Mirror* was our Columnist of the Year).

We thought *The Mirror* had an outstanding year with its sports coverage, but where were its red-top rivals? Of the 116 entries, there was not one story from *The Sun* or the *News of the World*, not one from the *Sunday Mirror* and just one from Wallis's own paper.

"It was not just a case of national journalists examining the navels of other national journalists. Judges included the publisher of a range of specialist sports magazines, the editor of the football magazine *On the Ball*, and the sports editor of *Time Out* — all under 40 years old — as well as active sports journalists on the nationals. We are all people whose first look at the papers in the morning is usually at the sports pages where the stories break — the tabloids, more often than not. We all knew the environment what was truly an exclusive news story, what was a good report filed under pressure, and what was a piece of feature writing that had genuine impact as well as literary worth."

I think that is our hint to the British Press Awards if they are more fairly to measure the real world of journalism rather than the upper end of it. Get more judges beyond the newspaper establishment, younger judges, and judges who represent the audience. I hope we will have some non-journalists on the sports award panel next year.

And, Neil Wallis, please click on to the internal mail at Canary Wharf and send a message congratulating Dex Kelly and his *Mirror* sports team and inquire about what happened to the other *Mirror* Group sites.

— TOM CLARKE

● Tom Clarke was sports editor of the London Evening Standard, the Daily Mail and The Times, and Editor of The Sporting Life.

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THE MOST beautiful and powerful piece of film on our screens is not one of Hollywood's technical epics, a BBC costume drama or even a wildlife series. It's a 60-second commercial for Guinness.

It has, however, been an unexpected benefit from the economic crisis. Alexei Simonov, of the Glasnost Defence Foundation, which monitors media abuses and provides legal help, says that it has forced the media to be less obsessed with itself. Journalists have begun to understand that survival was not

just a media problem but one that concerned the whole of society — a society waiting to be addressed.

Newspapers are now more relevant and have started to write "how to survive" stories. The number of titles has fallen, but total sales have increased. For the first time since the end of the Soviet Union people are buying newspapers because they are important to their lives.

The "least bad situation" is in

Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova, says Simonov. It is getting worse in Ukraine which, like Kazakhstan,

is closing media ranks with Belarus, Turkmenistan. He adds, is the worst case. In Armenia there is a free press, of sorts, but there are no laws; in Azerbaijan, there is one-man rule and little room for press freedom.

— TOM CLARKE

● Tom Clarke was sports editor of the London Evening Standard, the Daily Mail and The Times, and Editor of The Sporting Life.

and Walter Campbell — the team behind the dramatic Volvo ads of a couple of years back — tinkering with the script, the crew from AMV and the director, Jonathan Glazer ("swimblack", Nik Parklife, Levi's "Kung-Fu" and many others), went to Hawaii in January.

The commercial took more than

a year to develop. The idea was

derived from a poster presented by Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO in its pitch for the Guinness account. It featured a surfer looking expectantly out to sea. However,

last year Guinness kicked off its "good things" campaign with a beautiful, if confusing, commercial called "swimblack".

featuring an elderly Italian swimming a

certain distance in the time it takes to

pour a pint of Guinness.

The problem with the surfing idea was

getting around watchdog guidelines that

forbid associating alcoholic beverages

with enhanced sporting performance.

You'll notice that nobody drinks a pint of

the black stuff in the ad.

So, after three months of Tom Carty

shooting, even the fantastic physiques of the Lipizzaners were embellished by hand-drawn sinews and hair extensions.

The horse footage was melded to the

Hawaiian footage during six weeks of

painstaking work at London's Computer

Film Company. It was only then that the

soundtrack was agreed — the Velvet Under-

ground had been the original choice.

The ad was finished in mid-March and

went out on March 16 during Manchester United's game with Internazionale.

Was it worth it? It's too early to say.

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to throw off its comparatively

sedate image born of years advertising

the brand as a restorative pint. The

problem is classic: attracting new, younger

consumers without disenfranchising

existing Guinness drinkers.

The director John Lloyd once told me

that while he was at the BBC he had

thought the money spent on directing

commercials was "madness". When he

started spending the *Blackadder* series

budget (£20,000) on each Rowan Atkinson Barclaycard commercial, he thought

the BBC mad.

Watch "surfer" and understand that

there is method in Guinness's madness.

● Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of Cam-

paign.

— TOM CLARKE

● Tom Clarke was sports editor of the

London Evening Standard, the

Daily Mail and The Times, and

Editor of The Sporting Life.

— TOM CLARKE

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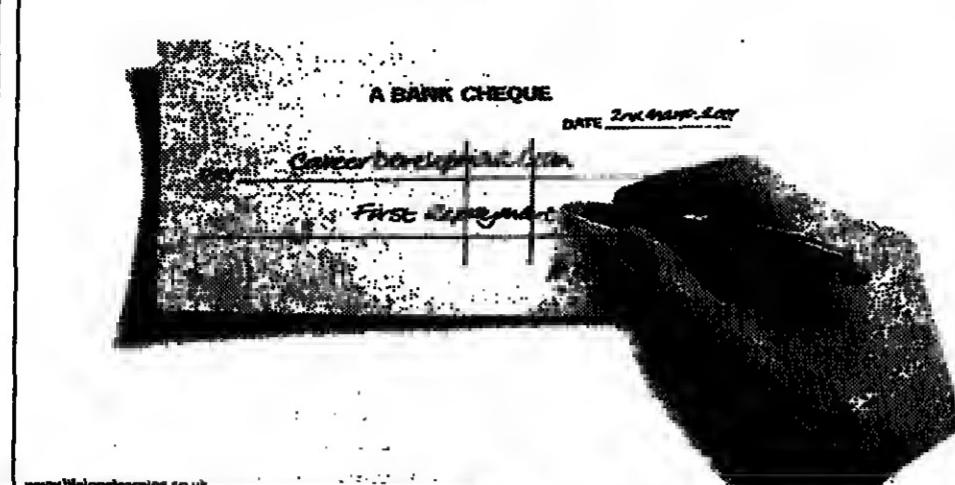
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EDUCATION

High-tech revision proves a useful tool



This weekend the shops will be full of panic-stricken parents and teenagers looking for a magic wand to stave off potential disaster in the face of imminent GCSE and A-level exams. Fortunately for them, the range of revision aids is growing by the year.

Teachers at the Association of Teachers and Lecturers' annual conference this week were scathing about "infinitely challenged parents" who drag their children from nursery school onwards. But by the time public examinations come around, even the most restrained wonder whether the unfortunate can-

diate could be doing more. Every expert will tell you that Easter is too late to start revising, but it is never too late to give a fillip to a process that is perhaps becoming stale. The trick is to find something that will reinforce the work you have done, not simply to provide a diversion.

Increasingly, this will come in the form of a CD-Rom or Internet service, rather than books. More ground can be covered in a limited period, and a new approach may be just what is needed to master aspects of a subject that refused to sink in at school or college.

But how does a parent or student

know where to start when faced with the burgeoning educational software market? The growth in the number of homes with computers has been outpacing virtually all other countries, but research for *Encyclopaedia Britannica* shows that most are used only for games, putting Britain behind much of Europe in educational usage. Surveys carried out by the Parents Information Network (PIN), which advises families on computer technology, leave little doubt that most computer owners would like to make more constructive use of them, but lack the knowledge to do so. Despite the wealth of magazines proffer-

ing advice, many parents lack the confidence to pick and choose between the grandiose claims of competing producers.

The PIN's recent surveys suggest that parents are right to be cautious, because genuinely useful programs are thin on the ground. At all levels of the education process it found room for improvement and gave especially low marks for revision CD-Roms designed to help children taking national curriculum tests. PIN's complaints about the standard of CD-Roms were not just that they failed to offer the support necessary to enable users to improve, but that

they were often inconsistent and inaccurate. Reading aids, too, were unsatisfactory and even the reference packages available for secondary school pupils were deemed "little more than digitised books".

At GCSE level, however, there are worthwhile packages on sale. Perhaps the size of the market and format of the examinations lend themselves to multimedia presentations, but there are CD-Roms and Internet services that meet students' needs in a way still inconceivable for other age groups. The BBC's *Bitesize* publications are probably the best example. A newly expanded range now

covers 13 subjects, from design and technology to religious education, offering revision topics and related questions, as well as various themes likely to be covered in future exams. Books, CD-Roms and websites are integrated with overnight television programmes designed for video.

BT's Home Campus shows that computer technology can be both popular and successful as a self-standing study aid. The shelves of computer stores are groaning with other examples. The age of the book is by no means over, but high technology is beginning to win the battle for the home revision market.

DAVID CHESHIN

How rigid courses stop learning

Pupils must stray from the syllabus, says Susan Elkin

Consider the national curriculum. Then consider what you would expect a 17-year-old to know of this century's history: the dates of the two world wars, for instance. Does the national curriculum ensure that the average teenager has the answers? I don't believe it does.

I was recently horrified by the 17-year-old who was astonished to learn a fact that most people would consider general knowledge. "Do you mean there were two world wars this century?" she asked.

Our present system, so laudable in intention, is profoundly anti-educational. The utilitarian checklist we call the national curriculum details precisely what every five to 16-year-old must learn. The danger is that once teachers and pupils tick off the specifications on the list, they often stop. That means that not one teenager in a hundred will be able to show you on a map where Cambridge or Southampton is because neither city is listed.

Standards of general knowledge — that which is useful and interesting but is nowhere enshrined in a syllabus — get ever worse. How



am I to teach the poetry and philosophy of Wordsworth to an A-level group, not one of whom can tell me the date of, or anything about, the French Revolution? Much of this ignorance and inability to reason stems from a lethal mixture of over-exposure to the lowest grade of television and a lack of wider reading. The prevailing view is that if something is not in the syllabus, reading it is a waste of time.

How many young people would visit an art gallery or museum voluntarily? One of my former pupils, now a law student, wrote recently with her news, which included the information that she'd visited a "great" sex museum in Amsterdam — so much more interesting than all the British museums to which she had been dragged in the past, she said.

Most youngsters are attuned to the notion that learning can be kept to a minimum. What happened to a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning for itself? Of course, we all want pupils to pass their exams, but they are not the totality of education. Real education is infinite. It is not hacked down to fit some blinkered syllabus compiler's cardboard file. A curriculum should be a beginning, not an end. We lose sight of that at our peril.

• The author is a teacher of secondary English.

A mark of distinction? The less academically able may feel pressure to take a university degree but in some cases they may be better advised to head straight for the job market

A degree of career failure

For students with weak A-level results, it has never been easier to get into university. But can this harm their job prospects? Nick Moore reports on the reluctant graduates

What is the worst career decision you have ever made? Philip Roberts believes that his mistake was going to university. "I'm £9,000 in debt and I've ended up in a job that I could have gone to straight from school," he says. "People should think twice before they do a degree course."

Mr Roberts, 24, who left Humberstone University last year with a 2.2 in tourism, is one of a growing number of graduates emerging from Britain's new universities, most of which were formerly polytechnics. Inevitably these institutions attract a number of less academic students who have failed to achieve the grades demanded by more established universities. But despite poor A levels, many students take up places at university because they think they should.

The situation is likely to worsen. Labour has eagerly adopted its Conservative predecessors' aim of getting a third of school-leavers into higher education. More than 300,000 students will start courses this autumn, often paying their own tuition fees and with lower than ever grant allowances.

By the time the present intake leaves college, thousands of graduates with poor A levels, second-rate degrees and

debts of up to £20,000 will be competing for employment. This could develop into a significant social problem if a large portion of a generation becomes embittered at an education system and Government that failed to direct them properly.

The growth of unusual and highly specific courses is compounding the problem and misleading many students. Subjects such as Boxing or Australian studies (complete with analysis of *Neighbours*) may sound fun but employers are wary of such courses. Degrees in media studies or marketing do not automatically lead to careers at the BBC or Saatchi & Saatchi; graduates in such disciplines often find it hard to find work in these fiercely competitive areas.

David Newbold, 24, who left Humberstone University with a 2.2 in European marketing last year, and now lives in Ormskirk, Lancashire, confirms this. "I have found it impossible to get into marketing," he says. "Nobody from my

course has got beyond sales positions. It's depressing, but these jobs are so demand." Mr Newbold is unemployed.

Matthew Simpson, 23, who has a 2.2 in management studies from Manchester Metropolitan University and two mediocre A levels, also regrets attending college. "I had to get work to fund myself, alongside £5,000 worth of loans," he recalls. "I feel it was an effort made in vain. Because my degree is not so good, I cannot find graduate work, yet I am overqualified for other jobs." He now works in a packing factory in Wrexham.

Yet the idea that anyone who can get into university should go, remains sacrosanct. Schools herd their pupils to university because it reflects well on their statistics; head teachers boast about their success rates. Parents are understandably flushed with pride that their offspring are bound for a noble seat of learning.

Universities, meanwhile, need to fill places to secure funding. They also produce statistics which suggest that most graduates get jobs. Humberstone says that 91 per cent of graduates do so, or go on to further education, and Manchester Metropolitan gives a figure of 85 per cent, although neither institution has a breakdown of the jobs their graduates take up.

The losers? Non-academic sixth-formers. Even if they are not interested in study and have poor results, they are seen as failures if they do not go to university, and are given little guidance if they opt out at this point. As for those who decide to attend university, record numbers are dropping out — for the same reasons that they shouldn't have gone.

Mr Roberts says: "If you aren't expecting good A levels, there is a strong argument for not applying. Unless you really know what you want to do and are determined to work hard, I would be tempted to try another option."

Mr Simpson agrees. "If I could have my time again, I would have done work experience after A levels in an area that interests me. Sixth-formers should be wary of going to university for the sake of it. It can be a costly mistake."

• E-mail: edpage@the-times.co.uk

• The author is a teacher of secondary English.

When lessons interrupt an important call



Nokia and Ericsson are the names to have

By the end of her teaching practice at a West London secondary, Debbie Colgen thought that she had seen it all — then a mobile phone rang at the back of her class. "If that wasn't bad enough," she recalls, "a student answered the phone by saying 'James Enterprises, how may I help you?' I didn't know whether to laugh, cry or shout."

Mrs Colgen is not the only teacher who has to cope with the explosive increase in mobile-phone activity among London secondary students. Usage is estimated at 30 per cent and teachers have reported phones ringing in examination halls, pupils calling from one classroom to another during lessons and even legal disputes over students using mobiles.

Mobile phones are unlike previous fads because they undermine tradition and authority. There is no way to monitor the wide social circle

within which a student might phone at school. Students sense this, hence the attraction of the mobile. Justine, 15, who goes to school in Central London, says: "When I have my phone, I can do what I want."

With phone prices in free fall and special payment plans designed to entice teenagers, the mobile's presence in schools seems certain to increase. At one London comprehensive 40 per cent of a class of 11-year-olds admitted having beepers or mobile phones. Chatting to friends is why they want them, but when asked why they should have them, all cited parental concern for their safety. But questioned more thoroughly, several older students admit-

ted they had conned their parents. One student said: "I told them I would be safer, but really I just wanted one because everyone else has them." He went on to boast about his phone's special features — such as a Union Jack cover (cost £30).

Mobiles represent the high point of technology as fashion. Nokia and Ericsson are the names to have and students compete to own the most compact or colourful version. Multi-coloured antennae that flash with incoming calls and unusual "rings" (from a Spice Girls tune to *The Godfather* theme) are *à la mode*. One student even confesses that she leaves her older phone at home because she is embarrassed by it. "It's a big, chunky one," she explains. "I use my friend's instead."

Aylward School in North London, where Mrs Colgen teaches, has reacted swiftly to the influx. Parents have been notified that mobile phones will be confiscated and kept in the school safe if they are discovered. Karen Reilly, a teacher, says: "We don't have much trouble with phones in the classrooms, although we realise that some are being carried around discreetly."

But teachers at other schools report continuing difficulties in controlling personal phones. Confiscation often leads to further disruptions. David Powell, a teacher in Harringay, accepts that emotions can run high. "Some of these phones are expensive," he adds. "It's not like taking away a baseball cap."

And because parents own the phones and have been sold on the mobile's safety attributes, they often endorse their child's decision to carry it. Some even insist on it. The most common strategy appears to be one of containment.

Iain Haresign, who teaches at Crofton Park School in Lewisham, believes that common sense must be used. "You cannot," he says, "check every bag in every lesson." Teenagers with pay-as-you-go plans often find themselves in serious debt. Some borrow money, others take afternoon jobs just to pay for their phone habit. And owners of particularly flashy mobiles are subject to threats and robbery — which makes nonsense of the protection supposedly offered by a mobile phone.

Chris McGrath sees Richard Hills flourish in Dubai

A reputation built on sand

England has rolled out the green carpet for Richard Hills, who flies home today after his annual migration to the desert. But the verdant spring that greets him can offer no blossom, no promise of new life, more invigorating than the unforgettable flowering he enjoyed in the arid sands of Dubai last Sunday.

His achievement in winning the Dubai World Cup on Almutawakel will be easily measured when he receives his cut of the sport's richest ever prize. Yet he would begin his season at Kempton Park tomorrow with no less exuberance had his reward been restricted to the astonishing instant carnival that greeted him at Nad al Sheba.

It was a moment of radiant fulfilment. On dismounting, in a touching conclusion to his rites of passage, he warmly embraced Tom Jones, the retired trainer who was his mentor for 17 of his 36 years.

From this peak of his career so far, Hills can acknowledge the problems he endured after succeeding Willie Carson as retained jockey to Sheikh Hamdan al-Maktoum. His relative anonymity, with both the public and invertebrate sceptics in the press, extended even to a detailed resemblance to his twin and fellow jockey, Michael.

In fairness, Almutawakel was only sealing the breakthroughs of last season, when Hills grew in self-belief and rode several big winners. Even so, their success repre-

sented an awakening every bit as stunning as the glistening towers surging from the desert horizon beyond.

Hills was on such a high that he could not sleep for two nights afterwards, and joy still consumed him when he interrupted his packing to reflect on what had happened. "You know, they were pretty big shoes I stepped into," he said.

"But Sheikh Hamdan showed faith in me and to pay him back like this is a dream. I felt everything had started coming together from last July."

"You take a while to get your confidence. Everyone makes mistakes. You need the horses to bring you out. But I was delighted with the way things

went then, and winning the Dewhurst on Mujahid really crowned it."

If Hills found his feet in that second season because he was riding better horses, equally the confidence such horses give a jockey was reflected in his own performance. "It's a mental thing, really," Hills said. "You read how Alan Stearne can't score a goal and the next minute he won't be able to stop."

"I could name 20 jockeys equally capable of winning on a given horse. But you need luck to get on the horse. You do put yourself under pressure. Things go wrong sometimes. Racing isn't all

pre-planned. Mind you, riding these horses is a lot easier than riding in a Nottingham seller."

But as that it may, Hills certainly gave Almutawakel a fine ride, seizing a decisive advantage in the straight and preserving it against the American rivals who harried him to the line. "It was one of those rare occasions when everything worked out as planned," he said.

"Being drawn six was a help. You've three furlongs before a turn and, when a horse has never had a race on dirt before, that helps build their confidence. They can become disoriented with dirt kicked in their faces. I never

had to use him up going round horses or into gaps. I was a bit worried about Central Park because I knew he'd kick, so I was pleased to stay within a length."

"But that last half-furlong, I thought it would never end. I could feel them coming down on me, all I could do was try to keep him balanced and hope. He's so courageous. First I just felt relief that we held on, but then the thrill kicked in. To win this race for Sheikh Hamdan — and the reception was unbelievable. It's my seventh season here and they follow racing very closely. It's different back at home because often people are cheering because they've won money. Here it's just their love of horses."

Now he hopes to sustain the momentum on home soil, notably with Mujahid in the Sagittarius 2000 Guineas. "He's a lovely horse with a turn of foot. I'm very confident he'll stay the mile and I know Mr Dunlop is very pleased with him."

Hills would be entitled to brash ambitions for the coming months — to claim centre stage in big races and show he belongs there. That he offers no such bluster is perhaps the most positive augur for his prospects of doing so. "I tell you what I'm going to do this year," he said quietly. "I'm going to keep my head down, keep pedalling. Keep enjoying it. Because every day, when I pick up the paper and see the horses I have to ride — well, it's a joy. Such a joy."

Photo: B K Bangash



Hills drives the game Almutawakel to victory over Malek. Photograph: B K Bangash

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Leicester

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Tour of Flanders disrupted as fallout from 'Festina Affair' continues

Cycling in chaos as police act

By JEREMY WHITTLE

THE doping scandals that enveloped the 1998 Tour de France erupted again yesterday, threatening the Tour of Flanders World Cup race that is due to take place this weekend. Daniel Baal, the president of the French Cycling Federation and vice-president of the International Cycling Union (UCI), and riders and management from Mapei, the world's No 1 professional team, were formally investigated by Belgian and French authorities.

Baal was formally charged by the French judiciary in Lille yesterday morning with doping offences as the fallout from the "Festina Affair" last July continued to devastate professional cycling's administrative hierarchy.

Meanwhile, in Belgium, the Three Days of De Panne stage race was thrown into chaos as Patrick Lefèvre, the Mapei team manager, was taken into custody, along with Tom Steels, his team's former Tour de France stage winner, who was leading the race. Under Belgian law, they can be kept in custody for up to 24 hours. The police action outraged Hein Verbruggen, the UCI president, who described the denouement of Lefèvre and his riders as "an attack on cycling". Verbruggen also defended Baal, his deputy. "I'm sure that the French Federation have done everything in their power in the war against doping," Verbruggen said. "I have complete confidence in Daniel Baal."

Lefèvre and his team were

prevented from starting the third stage of the race after a package found at the Courtrai depot of the DHL courier company, addressed to the Mapei team hotel, was passed on to police amid allegations that it contained a range of doping products. The Belgian authorities have so far confirmed only that amphetamines were found in the package.

Lefèvre was being questioned by Belgian police as the stage got under way, although, on hearing of his detention, several team managers and riders refused to continue and the stage was cancelled. After Lefèvre had been detained, all the Mapei riders, including Johan Museeuw, the former world champion, and Michele Bartoli, the world No 1, were also taken in for questioning.

"We're trying to establish whether there was a link between the destination of this package and the Mapei team," Louis Deneckere, the Belgian prosecutor, said. "The inquiry is only in its preliminary stages, but it may yet affect the smooth running of the Tour of Flanders."

At the same time, in Lille, Baal was protesting his innocence after spending four hours being interviewed and then charged by Judge Patrick Keil, who has led the French investigation since last summer. "All the charges against Baal, one of the most volatile recent critics of the ethical decay in professional cycling, said,



Museeuw, centre, and fellow members of the Mapei team were taken for questioning by Belgian police yesterday

Earlier this week, Richard

Virenque, the leader of the Festina team that was expelled from the Tour de France last year, and Roger Legeay, team manager of the Credit Agricole team that includes Chris Boardman, of Great Britain, were also formally charged by the French authorities under 1989 anti-doping legislation. Virenque was charged with conspiracy to make available and use doping products and with conspiracy to import,

purchase and make available poisonous substances. According to the "ethical code" introduced by the Société du Tour de France last autumn, riders facing investigation for doping offences are liable to be excluded from the race. The possible exclusion of Virenque, still a French national hero, will provide a stern test of the Tour organisation's resolve.

Late yesterday afternoon, Jean-Marie Leblanc, the direc-

tor-general of the Tour, arrived at the Palais de Justice in Lille to meet Judge Keil after eight hours of interviews with the French police, during which he was placed in custody but not charged. An hour later, Leblanc emerged and declared that Judge Keil had been "satisfied" with his answers. In total, 13 people, including riders, team managers, masseurs, pharmacists, administrators and team doctors have been charged since the investi-

gations began last July. The inquiry is now thought to be reaching its final stages. Museeuw and Bartoli are both past winners of the Tour de Flanders and are favourites for the race this year, which starts in Bruges on Sunday morning and is scheduled to pass through Museeuw's home town of Gistel. However, the participation of the Mapei team, if not the event itself, is now thought to be under threat.

Hanley has no Central reservations

On a busy day of rugby league, Christopher Irvine focuses on a hero's return to Wigan

THERE is no forgetting Ellery Hanley at Wigan Warriors, even though the St Helens coach, who amassed 17 winners' medals in six seasons at Central Park, is playing down his long-awaited return today in charge of the sworn enemy. "I've no idea what kind of reception I'll receive from the Wigan fans," he said, "but I'll be blanking everything out apart from the game."

Even though Hanley left Wigan for Leeds in 1991, his image still adorns the place, where he ruled through his force of personality and phenomenal talent. It is a mark of his achievements there that taking the coaching job at St Helens has not diminished his standing in the eyes of most Wigan supporters.

Never one for sentiment, Hanley said: "I enjoyed my days as a Wigan player, but that's history now. My only concern is to ensure my squad is mentally and physically prepared for an enormous game."

Hanley extended his clear-sighted objectives to his play-

ers' after the last JJB Super League home match against Gateshead Thunder by imposing an alcohol ban over their Easter programme of three matches in eight days. After Wigan, they face Bradford Bulls on Monday and then travel south to play London Broncos next Friday. "I believe alcohol impairs judgment and we have three difficult games," Hanley said.

John Monie, the Wigan coach, believes that St Helens are a tougher prospect under Hanley than they were last year. "We had three fairly easy wins against them, but they're paying much more attention to their defensive game," Monie said. "They have unpredictability in the halves, two of the biggest centres in the game in Iro and Newlove, and Ellery's toughened the pack up."

The stark truth is that St Helens have a miserable record at Central Park, winning just once in 15 visits. On the occasion of their last victory there, Good Friday two years ago, Sean Long, now the

St Helens scrum half, was a substitute in a below-par Warriors side, who were beaten 22-10. Since changing allegiances, Long, a born-and-bred Wiganer, has lost in all four games against his home town club.

"It was a weird feeling at first to be playing against Wigan and I took plenty of stick," Long said. "I still live in Wigan and I feel I've something to prove."

Should it come down to a place-kicking duel, Long is trusting that work on his technique with Dave Alred, the multi-code kicking guru, can give him the edge over the prolific Andy Farrell, who has scored for Wigan in 50 successive cup, league and play-off matches.

The only name in the Wigan

line-up that Hanley's days is West — Dwayne West, the teenage son of Graeme, the former Wigan forward and coach, who is expected to make his debut from the bench. Simon Haughton is restored to the second row and there is encouraging news on Denis Betts, who could make his comeback from an injury sustained last August at Wakefield Trinity on Monday.

St Helens, who need to cut down on their errors, are disadvantaged in the forwards, with Chris Joynot still injured and Paul Davidson suspended. Chris Smith comes into contention on the wing after a two-match ban, along with Anthony Sullivan, who has been largely overlooked by Hanley after his spell in rugby union.

With demands for Challenge Cup final tickets high, the attendance at the Stoop Memorial Ground for the visit this afternoon of Hull Sharks, in bottom place, will be watched for an upgrade in interest, as London seek to extend a six-match winning sequence. Shaun Edwards and Robbie Beazley, who both scored in the semi-final defeat of Castleford Tigers, undergo fitness tests.

The threads by which Andy Gregory is holding his job as coach of Salford Red Devils could snap with another defeat at the Willows. Gregory is already subject to an internal disciplinary procedure after public criticisms of his players, who face a Warrington Wolves side in confident mood after two opening league victories.

Gateshead have their best chance to break their duck at the Gateshead International Stadium tonight, although Wakefield, their fellow Super League newcomers, have had the better start by upsetting

Salford and nearly beating Castleford. Dean Bird is missing for the Thunder after breaking a finger in training. Andrew Hick returns from suspension, as does Tony Kemp for the visitors.

In two all-Yorkshire encounters, Sheffield Eagles and Huddersfield Giants are looking to get off the mark. Halifax Blue Sox are away at Castleford, where they have not lost in the Super League. Lee Harland, the former Halifax player, takes his place in the Castleford second row after an Achilles' tendon injury, while Kelvin Skerrett returns to the Halifax front row.

Faldo is hoping to find some return to form in Atlanta

CRICKET

ICC hits back after attack on Dalmiya

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) has responded to criticism of Jagmohan Dalmiya, its chairman, by Matthew Engel, the editor of *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack*. Engel called for the resignation of Dalmiya over the sport's match-fixing scandal, but David Richards, the ICC chief executive, praised Dalmiya yesterday for his efforts to tackle the allegations.

Richards said: "One of Mr Dalmiya's main achievements has been persuading the countries of the need for a united international response to the allegations of match-fixing." In his notes to launch the 1999 edition of *Wisden*, Engel described the scandal as the worst crisis since the Bodyline tour. "It is eating away at cricket's most vital asset: its reputation for fair play," he said. "Bodyline was easily solved by amending the Laws. This one is far harder to control. Cricket's response so far has been pathetic: almost frivolous."

Dalmiya almost split world cricket trying to take charge of the ICC. Having succeeded, he has given the game no leadership whatever. He should resign and be replaced

CANOEING

Marathon tests the toughest

CONCEIVED in a pub, the Greyhound in Pewsey, the Devizes to Westminster canoe race has developed into a great test of resilience and endurance. The fastest boats aim to complete the 125-mile course in less than 18 hours, the record being 15hr 34min, but the majority of competitors aim merely to finish.

One such competitor, Sir Ranulph Fiennes, the Arctic explorer, will be competing with Steven Seaton, the editor of *Runners World*, and will be looking to better his 1998 time of 30 hours. The favourites in the blue riband K2 class for men will be Dierckx and Verduyck, of Belgium, who came first and second in the singles category last year. However, they will need to beat Elliott and Vibre, of Maidstone, and Morrissey and O'Meara, of Ireland, over the course that takes competitors from Devizes, along the Kennet and Avon Canal to Reading and then on to the River Thames to London.

Richards also rejected allegations of a lack of leadership from Dalmiya, adding: "Mr Dalmiya masterminded the commercial success of the 1998 Willis International Cup, which has generated significant funds for the ambitious ICC development programme ... it revitalises the game."

SPORT IN BRIEF

Bronson suspended

ATHLETICS: Bryan Bronson, of the United States, the world's leading 400 metres hurdler, has been suspended after it was revealed that he failed a drugs test in Rome on July 14 last year. Bronson, 26, the bronze medal-winner at the 1997 world championships in Athens, clocked the third-fastest time ever — 47.03sec — when winning the United States title last June. However, after winning in Rome in the following month, a laboratory analysis of Bronson's urine sample was found to have "abnormal steroid concentrations". The delay followed a medical report that took six months to reach the IAAF.

TENNIS: Martina Hingis needed five match points before defeating Sylvia Plischke, of Austria, 6-3, 7-5 in the second round of the Family Circle Cup women's tournament in South Carolina. Hingis meets Conchita Martinez, of Spain, in the third round. Martinez, the No 10 seed, beat Alexia Dachau-Balleret of France 6-3, 6-0, and has lost only three games in the previous two rounds.

HINGIS faces tough task

BOXING: Richie Woodhall, the World Boxing Association super-middleweight champion, has followed Naseem Hamed and severed all links with Frank Warren. He has terminated two agreements he had with Warren, citing irreconcilable differences. The 30-year-old, who joined Warren in May 1997, will now be self-managed, although it is unclear who will promote his next contest.

WARREN loses Woodhall

BOXING: Richie Woodhall, the World Boxing Association super-middleweight champion, has followed Naseem Hamed and severed all links with Frank Warren. He has terminated two agreements he had with Warren, citing irreconcilable differences. The 30-year-old, who joined Warren in May 1997, will now be self-managed, although it is unclear who will promote his next contest.

Pakistan cruise to victory

CRICKET: Ijaz Ahmed and Inzamam-ul-Haq hit unbeaten half-centuries as Pakistan cruised to a seven-wicket victory over India in the Pepsi Cup tournament in Mohali. Both sides had already qualified for the final on Sunday in Bangalore, having beaten Sri Lanka. Chasing a modest victory target of 197, Pakistan reached the target in 42 overs.

مكتبة الأصل

GOLF

Misty-eyed Faldo seeks rule clarity

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN ATLANTA

FOG delayed the start of the BellSouth Classic here yesterday morning. A visitor from Great Britain would have found a familiar scene had he been at this sprawling venue just before 7am. When the Tournament Players' Club at Sugarloaf in Duluth, a suburb of Atlanta, was wreathed in a light fog, the visibility was poor and there was dampness and cold hanging in the air.

In fact, Greg Norman, the designer, may have put the cause of walking around a golf course, rather than riding in a buggy, back ten years by the way he has laid out this course, which does not so much sit on rolling land as sprawl all over it.

Play was delayed for two hours for the fog to lift and, when it did, Nick Faldo was one of the first to start. He, Billy Andrade and Paul Goydos were playing in the group immediately behind David Duval, the man of the moment in golf in the United States.

Faldo birdied the 2nd hole, a short par three, to move to one under par and was proceeding steadily until he nearly got caught in another rules tangle, rather like the one that saw him disqualified from the Players' Championship last Sunday.

On the 6th, Faldo's second shot, a lay-up, ended in casual water, from which he dropped out. His ball rolled into ground under repair and he was about to play it when Andrade urged caution, as Corey Pavin had not in Jacksonville, Florida, on Sunday. "If you're not sure Nick, you'd better get a rules official," Andrade said.

Andrade and Goydos continued with the hole while Faldo waited for Steve Carmen, a rules official, to come and give his ruling.

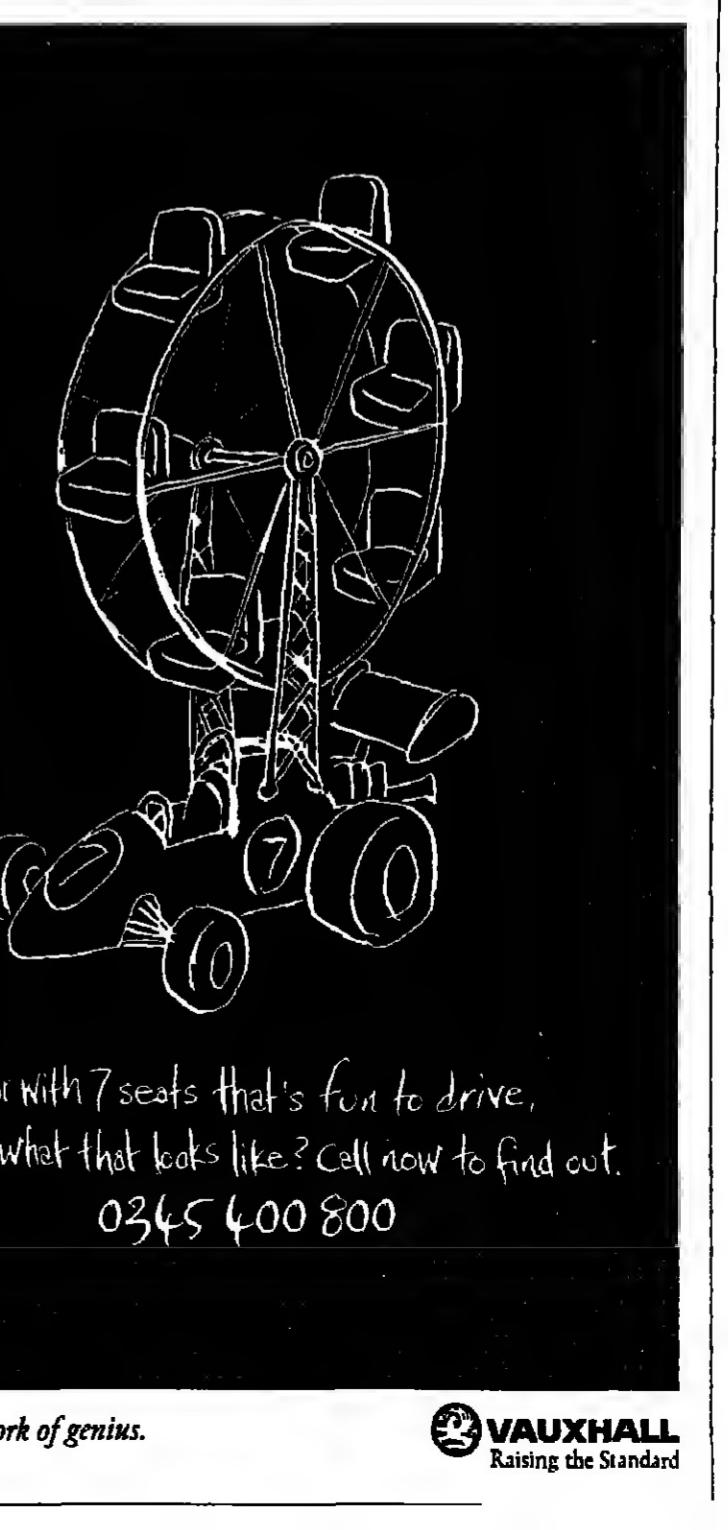
"You can play it if you want to or drop it if you want to," Carmen said. Faldo, whose birdie off on the 10th at much the same time as Faldo had begun from the 1st, reached his turn in 36, level par. He was six strokes behind Grant Waite, the leader, who had played 11 holes, and five behind David Frost, who had six holes of his first round still to play.

Duval, who had birdied the 4th hole, then added a string of three consecutive birdies starting at the 10th to be four under par.

MURAD SEZER



Faldo is hoping to find some return to form in Atlanta



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Raising the Standard

Pride demands Lions should stay home-reared

The present Five Nations Championship might be highlighting a dilemma. What is to happen to the Lions? This may appear to be a premature question, seeing that they are not due to embark on their next tour to Australia and New Zealand. For another two years yet, but, in fact, time is short.

Debates about the future of British Isles tours have arisen largely at home, hardly ever in the countries that the Lions visit. The home nations can travel individually to the southern hemisphere as often as they like, but they stir a mere ripple of interest in comparison to the tidal wave that consumes these countries whenever their territory is entered by the Lions.

Their reputation and charisma cannot be replaced. There may be some romantic notion attached to their presence, the old collective kinship, perhaps, or the idea that the Lions represent a cavalier style of rugby that is not so obvious a

'Rules can be bent this way and that'

characteristic of their own national teams — even if such a statement is not true to the same extent these days — or, simply and less charitably, they present the opportunity for the colonials to give the old country a good thumping. However varied the reasons may be, a clamorous welcome awaits the Lions.

There is also an eminently practical reason, too, which is unavoidably important. The host unions know on which side their bread is buttered. The visit of the Lions represents a good pay day. The revenue from such a tour far exceeds that which a visit from any one of the separate home unions might bring. It is not the actual existence of the Lions that is in question — that matter has been resolved, for the time being at any rate — it is more a question of who will play for the Lions in future, and who will coach them.

These queries were the subject of debate over a cosy lunch recent-

ly in one of Piccadilly's famously convivial watering holes. Around the table were players who, in a previous incarnation, had been Lions.

Former players of a certain vintage find, to a combination of fun and concern, that it is time for a reunion. Troublingly, however enjoyable, these anniversaries appear to come around at a somewhat faster rate than they once did and point to a more sombre truth. It was all such a long time ago.

It was Tom Kiernan, chairman of the European Rugby Cup, but who less stressfully once held the more agreeable positions of captain of Ireland and the Lions, who prompted the debate about the future constitution of British Isles touring teams. This was at the time when the argument arose about the possibility that Joel Stransky might qualify, on residential grounds, to play fly half for England. If this were to be the case, might he then not also qualify to play for the Lions? Thus, having once been a Springbok who dropped the famous goal that sent his country into the history books

ly from New Zealand, but, on the form that they have shown in recent internationals, would be automatic Lions candidates. What change of flavour might this represent in the touring party? There are others in this season's championship who have similar qualifications. Indeed, as Kiernan observed whimsically, what will be the mood of future unions?

There was no mistaking the allegiances of those around our table. Bob Hiller, Peter Larner and Tony Horton, all of firm English pedigree; Roger Arnell, a pure Scot; John Taylor and Gareth Edwards of Wales and Kiernan himself. Future conversations, for sure, might ring to different accents.

The rules can be bent this way and that we can be of a tolerant nature about who can and cannot qualify, but, in the final analysis, it cannot surely be for the good of British and Irish rugby that we have to look overseas for players to salvage our international reputations.

Let us take another step. Who

would coach the Lions? Two of the present national coaches are not home-grown. Both Warren Gatland, the Ireland coach, and Graham Henry, who acts in a similar capacity for Wales, are from New Zealand. Before Clive Woodward took over his responsibilities there was a well-publicised search by England for a coach from overseas. Henry was approached at the time. After Woodward was appointed, John Mitchell, also a New Zealander, became his assistant. The field of choice is limited.

The candidates narrow further. Scotland might try this man and that, but when Ian McGeechan decided to stay out of the international fray, they turned, as ever, to the transcendent figure of Jim Telfer, a nonpareil in Scottish rugby.

If he could be persuaded, through his deep sense of his own Scottishness, to do his bit once more for Scotland, it seems doubtful whether he might be persuaded.

Clearly, coaches from New Zealand are capable of raising standards in a way others cannot, but praising them serves only to highlight, at the same time, the dearth of coaches of top calibre in this country.

For all the increasing profile of rugby and for all the money that has been spent on its development, there is, in having to turn to the talents of outsiders, an admission of failure.

A formal coaching structure with training, teaching and assessment courses was the brainchild of a Welshman, Ray Williams, yet Wales have benefited least. The story is hardly better elsewhere in these islands. It is a deficiency that requires urgent attention.

David Hands looks at two England outsiders duelling for attention

Forgotten men vie for centre stage

WHILE the great fly half debate has raged in England — should it be Mike Catt or Paul Grayson? — Jonny Wilkinson ready yet? — two men stand just outside the circle. Mark Mapletoft and Alex King could be forgiven for thinking that they lie beyond even the peripheral vision of the England management, despite their selection this season in A-team squads.

Both have been capped, though King has played for a total of less than 50 minutes in his two games for England, the first against Argentina in 1997, when his appearance allowed an out-of-sorts Mapletoft to move to full back, the second against South Africa last year. They have kept each other company for the successful England A side this year, though King has been limited to one appearance as a replacement.

They will be together again at Loftus Road on Sunday, though on opposing sides. Mapletoft will be part of the Gloucester squad, but Gloucester are too coy to say that he will play in his favoured No 10 shirt as the West Countrymen challenge Wasps for a place in the Tetley's Bitter Cup final. Injuries are rife in the Kingsholm camp at the moment and Mapletoft could be on duty at full back, centre or even among the replacements.

All things being equal, King will be in his usual, pivotal role during a season in which his powers of recuperation have been tested to the limit. There were few sadder figures than the 24-year-old during England's depicted tour of the southern hemisphere last summer; he made two appearances, one against a New Zealand Academy XV, the other against New Zealand Maoris. The Academy scored 50 points against England, the Maoris 62 and King was one of those dispatched home from New Zealand rather than see out the final week of the tour in South Africa.

Ironically, it was against South Africa in December that King indicated his emergence from the depths into which he had plunged in the summer. Required among the replacements after Grayson sustained a knee injury, he played the last quarter of the match and displayed a confidence that many had thought was beyond him.

He has always been prepared to work hard, be it on his tactical kicking, his goal-kicking or his reading of the game. Perhaps, in some ways, his approach has been too self-effacing: fly halves need to be arrogant, but King is a more unobtrusive type of player. When he is on song, he makes space for others, so his return to form is testimony not only to the repair work done by his club, but also to his own character.



King, left, and Mapletoft will hope to press their World Cup claims when they meet in the Tetley's Bitter Cup semi-final at Loftus Road on Sunday



Gatland indulges in reshuffle

BY KARL JOHNSTON AND DAVID HANDS

Ciaran Scally for Conor McGuinness, Justin Fitzpatrick for Paul Wallace, Ross Nesdale for Keith Wood, Trevor Brennan for Andy Ward and Victor Costello for Eric Miller. Peter Clohessy moves from loose to tight-head prop, his original position, and Dion O'Connell gains switches from blind to open-side flanker. Henderon, Scally, Brennan and Costello came on as replacements at Murrayfield.

Matt Mostyn, 23, an Australian with Irish grandparents, Mike Mullins, 28, a New Zealander with a father born in Ireland, and Shane McDonald, 27, another New Zealander, are in the Ireland A

team to play their Italy counterparts on April 9.

Gareth Davies, who as Cardiff chief executive, has been at the forefront of the club's fight with the Welsh Rugby Union this season, is to succeed Osie Wheadey as chairman of the Potters Council for Wales. The appointment, worth £30,000 a year for a three-day week, means that Davies has had to give up his position at Cardiff, who, along with Swansea, have still to find a formula for returning to the union that has fined them heavily for playing in the Anglo-Welsh series.

Paul Turner, another former Wales fly half, who joined Saracens from Bedford

this season as coach to the backs, has been released by the Warrington-based club, which put ten players on the transfer list last month.

"This does not reflect upon Paul's ability and commitment," Mark Evans, the director of rugby, said. "We hope his skills will shortly be enjoyed by another top side." Yesterday, however, Turner was being linked with Basingstoke.

IRELAND: C O'Brien (London Wasps), B. Ryan (London Irish), R. Henderson (Wasps), G. Dempsey (Tevioton College), E. Ellwood (Galwegians), C. Scott (UCD), J. Reardon (Ulster), J. McManus (Perpignan), P. Gleeson (Young Munster), P. John (Saracens), C. Larmour (Cardiff), T. Brennan (St. Mary's College), R. O'Donnell (Ulster), V. Costello (St. Mary's College), R. Murphy (Cork Constitution), A. Walsh (Ballymohinch), P. Wallace (Saracens), K. Wood (Basingstoke)

goals in the league, ten from open play. Supplementary fire-power can be provided by Gordon Hammond and Huw Hudd. However, Beeston will be without West and Sully, who are both representing England at under-18 level in Belfast.

England made a flying start to a quadrangular tournament in Buenos Aires when they trounced South Africa 6-0 on Wednesday thanks largely to a hat-trick from Giles.

Slough will endeavour to win the women's European Cup for the first time this weekend in The Netherlands. The English champions have by

there's few enough of them," Mapletoft said, with the feeling of one who, even when England were scraping for players to tour last summer, found that he was not one of them.

Mapletoft said, with the feeling of one who, even when England were scraping for players to tour last summer, found that he was not one of them.

No has this season been particularly easy. Mapletoft scored two of his tries at Richmond last September, which remains Gloucester's only away victory of the Premiership season. He has had to accept the presence of Simon Mannix in competition for the No 10 shirt. He has learnt to suffer periods on the bench but still bounces back, as a runner and goalkicker.

"This does not reflect upon Paul's ability and commitment," Mark Evans, the director of rugby, said. "We hope his skills will shortly be enjoyed by another top side." Yesterday, however, Turner was being linked with Basingstoke.

Both players still harbour fantasies about playing in a World Cup. There are precious few stages now upon which to impress Clive Woodward, the England coach, but Sunday is one of them and the winner will have a Twickenham occasion on which to strut his stuff.

Ali cleans up

Claim to fame ... Dan Lyle, the Bath and United States No 8, grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, where he was renowned as a sportsman. Not the best-known, however: his mother can recall a time when she was a girl in high school and her classroom cleaner was a teenage Cassius Clay, working overtime to earn some pocket-money.

Kick starters

Jonny Wilkinson is England's latest kicking wonderkid, but the hunt is already on for his successor. As part of his testimonial year, Jon Callard is launching a nationwide tour this summer in a bid to unearth the next generation of goalkickers.

Shorts shrift

Dave Lougheed, the Leicester and Canada wing, tried to get into the casino at Monte Carlo recently, but was turned away because he was wearing shorts. No problem: Lougheed, a strapping off 21 and 14st, borrowed some trousers from a woman in his group and tried again.



"Perfect sir," the doorman said. The cut was a little tight, but Lougheed enjoyed the experience, by all accounts.

Sefton appeal

Sefton Rugby Club has launched appeals to help two stalwarts who were paralysed last year. Dave Hawkey sustained a serious neck injury in a game at Southport and is still in the spinal injuries unit at Southport Hospital. He has slight movement in both shoulders and his right wrist. A second tragedy occurred when Alan Pennington, St. a former coach, chairman and president, fell from a riverbank while fishing and was also paralysed below the neck. Donations can be made to the Hon. Secretary, Sefton RUFC, Thornhead Lane, Leyfield Road, West Derby, Liverpool, L12.

Upper crust

"England have a good balance. As well as some crusty old players, like Martin Johnson and Jason Leonard, they've also got some younger players, like Jonny Wilkinson. Says who? Says Wayne Shelford, the former New Zealand No 8 and captain, who, as a 'crusty' player himself, set Northampton on the upward path in the early 1990s. He also comments on the 'uncomplicated' nature of the Five Nations Championship. 'Super 12 teams try to be too clever and do too much with the ball close in, when they should move it wide at pace,' he says. Praise indeed.

Beached Wales

Life's a beach. Or at least it will be in London in June with the launch of beach rugby. The event is sponsored by Fuller's Brewery, which is bringing 750 tonnes of white sand to Hurlingham Park. Some of the world's top former stars will captain the eight international teams, which include England (Peter Winterbottom), Scotland (Gavin Hastings), Wales (Jonathan Davies) and Ireland (Jim Staples).

MARK SOISTER

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 48

(c) A mass of rock which has solidified under ground from an intrusion of magma. Plutons have varying shapes, sizes and relationships with the invaded rock surrounding them.

LOOSE SILKY BENT

(c) An annual weed which flowers in early summer, and grows up to 1 metre high. It has broadly opening spreading panicles, with one-flowered, awned spikelets.

SHAKEHOLE

(a) A roughly circular depression in the landscape, from which water drains into an underground limestone cave system. The term should be used only for a depression formed by the collapse of underlying limestone strata.

TAMBOUR

(a) A flexible shutter used as a closure for cabinets, desks, bedside cupboards, etc. It is made by gluing strips, inserted at either end, into a groove, to strips of linen or canvas.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1 ... Qxa2+ 2 Nxa2 Nb3 checkmate

Beeston prepare for Spanish threat

HOCKEY
By Sydney Friskin
and Janet Ruff

tion in a pool that Beeston must win to qualify for the final on Easter Monday. Three Rock Rovers, of Ireland, are in the other pool, along with Amsterdam, the hosts, Poole, of Poland, and Minsk, from Belarus.

Beeston's main hopes rest with Keegan, the short-corner expert, who has scored 15

goals in the league, ten from open play. Supplementary fire-power can be provided by Gordon Hammond and Huw Hudd. However, Beeston will be without West and Sully, who are both representing England at under-18 level in Belfast.

England made a flying start to a quadrangular tournament in Buenos Aires when they trounced South Africa 6-0 on Wednesday thanks largely to a hat-trick from Giles.

Slough will endeavour to win the women's European Cup for the first time this weekend in The Netherlands. The English champions have by

far the best record in Europe of any British club, but have only five runners-up trophies to show for their efforts.

Ray Burd, the coach, will field an all-international line-up, with the defence marshalled by Karen Brown and strike power supplied by Jane Smith and Mandy Nicholson, of England, and Sue McDonald, of Scotland. Edinburgh, the Scottish champions, are without Rhona Simpson, their injured Great Britain striker.

In the Cup Winners' Cup in Terrassa, Spain, British hopes rest with Clifton and Glasgow Western.

CURLING

Scotland in fine form

THE Ford world championships get under way tomorrow at St John's New Brunswick, and the Scotland men's squad, skippered by Hammy McMillan, with Peter Loudon and Euan MacDonald, is essentially the Warwick Smith team of earlier this season, with Smith now playing at No 3. They are in fine fettle.

By then, McMillan will hope to have had wins against Denmark and the United States behind him. The new Scotland women's squad of Debbie Knox, Wendy Bell, Judith Stobie and Isabel Hannan face Germany, the European champions, in the first of nine preliminary rounds tomorrow morning, followed by Canada in the evening.

مكنا من الأصل

Rob Hughes gives a warning to the Great Britain Davis Cup team

Beware Americans bearing praise

Einstein was right and nationalism really is an infantile disease, then stay clear of National Indoor Arena in Birmingham this weekend. There is going to be an epidemic of the stuff, a febrile, contagious explosion of Britishness as the majority in a packed arena try to transmute Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski's will to bring back to these shores the Davis Cup last won in the days of Fred Perry almost 70 years ago.

The first-round tie, against the original enemy, the United States, where the competition was invented a century ago, suggests, on the computer rankings, that our boys have the ascendancy. Indeed, with America's finest declining to take the challenge, with American tennis uncharacteristically talking down the Britons and talking down their own second-string squad, led by Jim Courier and Todd Martin, there is another disease we need to inoculate against: complacency.

Beware the sting of Americans. Beware those who bemoan the absence of Pete Sampras, who said: "My country? No thanks". Beware the double-talk of Andre Agassi, who in December purred on about the Davis Cup giving some kind of special energy above the call of dollars on the ATP circuit, but who has now receded with the excuse that he cannot play in a team that drops his favourite doctor.

And be careful of the statistics that place Henman and Rusedski in the top 11, Martin at No 10 and "old" Courier down at No 52. Courier is not sold that, at 23, he has forgotten the relentless hunger that made him, in 1993 and 1994, the most warrior-like tennis player on any surface anywhere in the world.

This has been a week of historic comebacks. In the United States, Wayne Gretzky has defied disc trouble in his neck to put beyond doubt that he is the most amazing gatherer of scoring records in ice hockey. In the Caribbean, Brian Lara has reinvented his mastery at the crease. So how much would it take for Courier



Courier, Agassi, Tom Gullikson, the coach, Sampras and Martin celebrate winning the Davis Cup in 1995; only Courier and Martin will be in Birmingham

'At 28, Courier is not so old that his game cannot become inspired by patriotism'

er, who stands among only six tennis players to reach the finals of all four grand slam tournaments, to become inspired by patriotism? Martin, while never such a winner on tour, is the most consistent American on the circuit and has the mentality for team play that is the core of Davis Cup.

Dwight Davis, the Harvard scholar, politician and philanthropist, when he commissioned the most handsome of silver bowls in 1899, could not have envisioned that approaching 150 nations would now seek to hold it. He may have sensed the compulsion, between the United States and what was then the British Isles, would become an engrossing annual affair, exclusively male because the fairer (or, according to this

resembled Don King in calling out the patriots to take every available seat in the near-9,000 capacity hall. Lloyd went to town on this after witnessing the fanaticism in the Forum of Milan last December. There, in the final of the Davis Cup last season, 12,600 Italian *tifosi* chanted for 4hr 57min while Andre Gaudenzi played above his status against Magnus Norman, of Sweden.

It was the courage of the jump jockey returning to Aintree after crushing his bones there in a fall, the effort of boxers, the will of marathon runners, the desire of a competitive man driven beyond reason by the intoxicating hour of playing for, and with,

a glass, much less swing a racket. The 1998 Davis Cup, and possibly Gaudenzi career, were lost in that muscle-tearing moment, but those who were there, including Boris Becker, Stefan Edberg, Yannick Noah and Vijay Amritraj — Davis Cup fighters from different cultures — all knew why Gaudenzi had to try.

His was the courage of the jump jockey returning to Aintree after crushing his bones there in a fall, the effort of boxers, the will of marathon runners, the desire of a competitive man driven beyond reason by the intoxicating hour of playing for, and with,

the people. Money, which Davis is never mentioned, came into it because, although, like most sporting ideals, the Davis Cup was born in Corinthian times, tennis is now among the elite, arguably the sport that places the dollar highest.

And yet, Noah, the captain

when France beat all odds to capture the prize in 1991 and 1996, articulates the special affinity of the Davis Cup. "It takes individual character to win the grand slams," he has said, "but what you do in the Davis Cup is sacrificed for others. It's about sharing, it's respecting team-mates. The bonds that you have in a team and the way the crowd share and sense that are feelings above the norm in tennis."

Nationalism a disease? In the right time and the right place, nobody ever died of it.

Giants meet Sharks in classic finale

By NICHOLAS HARLING

THE closest title race for years — how often is that phrase used? Probably every season, at a rough guess, not just in basketball but in every sport. However, this year British basketball really does have its closest race, not just for years, but ever.

Two years ago, five clubs went into the final month with a chance of the Budweiser League title, but the Leopards eventually won with a game to spare. Last season, the Leopards and Birmingham Bullets took their dispute to the very last day. They both won their respective fixtures to finish level on points, but the Leopards retained the title on the countback of games between the clubs.

Yet when Manchester Giants and Sheffield Sharks meet this afternoon in the Nynex Arena, it will be the classic finale, with the winner taking all. Never before have the two contenders met on the last day with everything at stake.

A week ago, the game had looked to be of no more than academic interest. Last weekend, when the Giants won away to Birmingham, the Sharks seemed certain to repeat their league and cup double of 1995. The first game against Newcastle Eagles went without slips, but the following day, Chester Jets, who had fallen way short of reaching the play-offs, staged the upset of the season to bring the title show down.

Psychologically, the advantage is with the Giants, even though they lost both league fixtures between the clubs this season, the second one a fortnight ago when, after his team's controversial double overtime defeat in the Sheffield arena, Nick Nurse, the coach, was fined £300 and received a two-game ban that will not start until the quarter-final play-offs next week.

The Giants, who reversed their two league losses against the Sharks in both legs of the Uni-Ball Trophy semi-final en route to winning that competition, are thanks to the resources provided by the American-based Cooke Organisation, the most expensively-built squad in the league.

Under Nurse, formerly coach of the Bullets, the Giants acquired four of the Leopards' title-winners. They were Ronnie Baker, John White, Makeeba Perry and Mike Delfoe. Throw in Tony Holley, from Thames Valley Tigers, and Tony Dorsey, who joined from the Bullets, and it was easy to see why the joke pre-season was: "With egos like that, the Giants will need more than one ball." Somehow, Nurse found a solution.

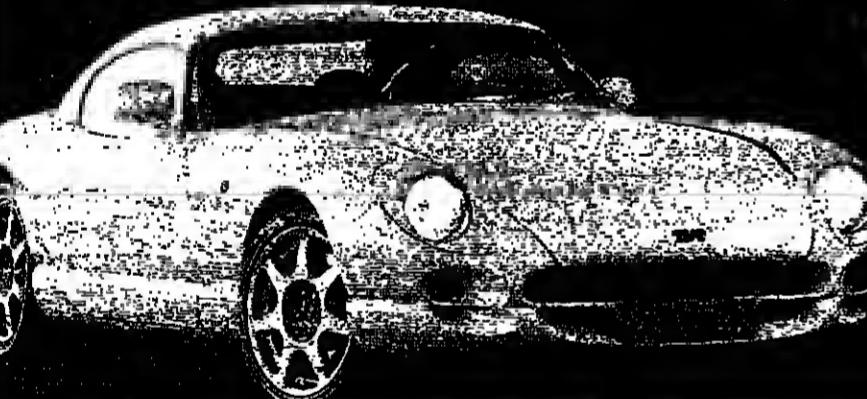
At 29, Chris Finch, the Sharks' coach and a member of their victorious squad in 1995, has performed wonders. If he can raise the morale of a squad that looked demoralised on its way out of Chester, he will be worth every accolade. Under Finch, the Sharks are less flamboyant, but, until last weekend at least, more consistent.

That was hardly surprising since Terrell Myers, Todd Cauthorn and Wil Johnson, the core of the squad last season, all remained. The departure of Matt Gaudio, with a cruciate ligament injury, deprived the Sharks of one outstanding new recruit, but another, Travis Conlan, had already provided an extra spark, as did Peter Scanlon, the former Egland captain.

Of all the emotions the respective casts have endured this season, nothing will compare with the torment of today. There may be no more than a point in it.

LINKS
WEBSITE: www.basketball-league.co.uk

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION



WIN A £40,000 TVR

Plus £15,000 in cash prizes and Grand Prix trips for runners-up

The Fantasy Formula One results of the Australian Grand Prix appear below with Eddie Irvine leading the drivers on 155 points and Arrows heading the constructors with 21 points. J Kilmartin of Maldenhead, Berks, wins a pair of four-day passes to this year's British Grand Prix. His team, Princers 9, scored 618 points in Melbourne and comprised M Schumacher, Irvine, Fisichella, R Schumacher, Frentzen and Takagi for the drivers and Ferrari, Benetton, Williams, Arrows, BAR and Stewart for the constructors. The winner of our fantasy title will drive away at the end of the season in a TVR Cerbera, valued at over £40,000. Second prize is £10,000 plus a trip for two to the 2000 Monaco Grand Prix. Third prize is £5,000 plus a pair of four-day passes to the 2000 British Grand Prix. To enter a team for the Brazilian GP, which offers up to 600 bonus points, or to make transfers, see details below.

Benetton, Williams, Arrows, BAR and Stewart for the constructors. The winner of our fantasy title will drive away at the end of the season in a TVR Cerbera, valued at over £40,000. Second prize is £10,000 plus a trip for two to the 2000 Monaco Grand Prix. Third prize is £5,000 plus a pair of four-day passes to the 2000 British Grand Prix. To enter a team for the Brazilian GP, which offers up to 600 bonus points, or to make transfers, see details below.

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX RESULTS

DRIVERS: Qualifying points (scored by qualifying for the start of each grand prix within the first 20 positions on the grid): Pole M Hakkinen 30 points; 2nd D Coulthard 25; 3rd M Schumacher 24; 4th R Barrichello 23; 5th H-H Frentzen 22; 6th E Irvine 21; 7th G Fisichella 20; 8th R Schumacher 19; 9th D Hill 18; 10th A Wurz 17; 11th J Villeneuve 16; 12th J Trulli 15; 13th J Herbert 14; 14th P Diziz 13; 15th A Zanardi 12; 16th J Alesi 11; 17th T Takagi 10; 18th P de la Rosa 9; 19th R Zonta 8; 20th O Panis 7. Finishing points (scored for the top 20 classified positions at the end of every grand prix): 1st E Irvine 60 points; 2nd H-H Frentzel 50; 3rd R Schumacher 40; 4th G Fisichella 30; 5th R Barrichello 29; 6th P de la Rosa 28; 7th T Takagi 27; 8th M Schumacher 26. (Only 8 were classified). Lap points (one point for each lap completed): E Irvine 57 points; H-H Frentzel 57; R Schumacher 57; P de la Rosa 57; T Takagi 57; M Schumacher 56; R Zonta 48; L Badoer 42; A Wurz 28; P Diziz 27; M Gene 25; J Trulli 25; O Panis 23; M Hakkinen 22; A Zanardi 20; D Coulthard 13; J Villeneuve 13. Improvement from starting grid to finishing position (3 points for each improved place): P de la Rosa 36 points; T Takagi 30; E Irvine 15; R Schumacher 15; H-H Frentzel 9; G Fisichella 7; M Schumacher 10 points. Fastest lap time of grand prix: M Schumacher 1:16.9. Penalties: Incident resulting in a driver being made to start from back of grid or pit lane (10 points deducted); M Schumacher 10 points; R Barrichello 10. Didn't finish the race (10 points deducted); R Zonta 10 points; L Badoer 10; A Wurz 10; P Diziz 10; M Hakkinen 10; A Zanardi 10; D Coulthard 10; J Villeneuve 10; D Hill 10; J Alesi 10. Not starting after qualifying (10 points deducted); J Herbert 10 points. Speeding (5 points deducted); nona. **CONSTRUCTORS:** Finishing points (scored for the first car only in the top 20 positions at the end of every grand prix): Ferrari 30 points; Jordan 25; Williams 24; Benetton 23; Stewart 22; Arrows 21. Penalty points (incident resulting in a car being made to start from back of grid or pit lane (10 points deducted); Ferrari 10 points; Stewart 10; Benetton 10; Williams 10; Jordan 10; Arrows 10). Elimination of a car during the race (10 points deducted): McLaren 20 points; Prost 20; Sauber 20; Minardi 20; BAR 20; Jordan 10; Williams 10; Benetton 10. Not starting after qualifying (10 points deducted); Stewart 10 points. Speeding in the pit lane (5 points deducted); none.

BONUS POINTS apply to six grands prix during the 1999 Formula One championship, the first of which is the Brazilian GP. Correctly predicting winning driver: 100 points; second place: 200 points; third place: 300 points

THE PRIZES

STAR PRIZE The manager with the top score on our fantasy leaderboard after the final race of the season will win £1,100 TVR Cerbera, plus a VIP trip for two to any GP next season
2ND PRIZE £10,000 plus a VIP trip for two to the 2000 Monaco GP.
3RD PRIZE £5,000 plus a pair of four-day passes to the 2000 British GP.
INDIVIDUAL RACE WINNERS The manager of the team that scores the most points in each GP will win a pair of four-day passes, with centre transfer, for the 1999 or 2000 British Grands Prix, courtesy of Silverstone

Silverstone*
For details of events at Silverstone call 0127 857273

TO ENTER BY PHONE

Readers in the UK and Republic of Ireland must call 0840 67 88 88 (+44 870 901 4206 from ROI). Calls last about seven minutes and must be made by Touch-tone telephone. Follow the instructions and tap in your 12 two-digit selections in turn. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. Then give your team name (up to 16 characters) and details. You can enter until noon on Thursday, April 8, 1999 to qualify for the Brazilian Grand Prix.

TO ENTER BY POST

Complete the form, right, with your 12 two-digit selections. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply

MAKE THREE SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS BELOW

The column of figures below shows the Fantasy Formula One race scores for the Australian Grand Prix		DRIVERS				CONSTRUCTORS			
		GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C		GROUP D	
01 M Hakkinen	41	07 E Irvine	63	13 J Trulli	151	20 A Wurz	80	29 Williams	21
02 M Schumacher	108	08 G Fisichella	22	19 H-H Frentzel	153	10 R Barrichello	80	30 BAR	20
03 O Panis	8	09 G Frentzel	18	14 J Trulli	154	20 P Diziz	80	31 Jordan	2
04 D Coulthard	22	10 J Alesi	4	15 T Takagi	155	20 P de la Rosa	120	32 Minardi	15
05 A Zanardi	22	11 J Herbert	4	16 07000	156	21 L BARBER	120	33 BARBER	20
06 J Villeneuve	19			17 March Team	157				

TRANSFERS

You can make a total of 12 transfers. Each transfer allows you to change one selection. You can make up to four transfers with each call. For the Brazilian GP call 0840 678 801 (+44 870 901 4240 ex UK) with your 10-digit PIN.

BY FAX: have your 10-digit PIN ready, pick up the handset on your fax, or press the on-hook or telephone button, and dial 0991 123 714. Follow the instructions. You will receive details of your race score, the points for your drivers and constructors and your position on our leaderboard. Calls cost £1 per minute and are available in the UK only. If you have any problems, call the helpline on 0171-412 3795

RESULTS SERVICE
BY PHONE: check the score and position of your team(s) after the Australian race by calling 0840 622 178 (+44 870 901 4278 ex UK) with your 10-digit PIN.
BY FAX: have your 10-digit PIN ready, pick up the handset on your fax, or press the on-hook or telephone button, and dial 0991 123 714. Follow the instructions. You will receive details of your race score, the points for your drivers and constructors and your position on our leaderboard. Calls cost £1 per minute and are available in the UK only. If you have any problems, call the helpline on 0171-412 3795

THE TIMES NATWEST FANTASY FORMULA ONE ENTRY FORM

Complete this form with your credit-card details, or enclose a sterling cheque for £3 payable to Fantasy Formula One. (For readers resident outside the UK and Republic of Ireland the fee is £15.) Post it to: The Times NatWest Fantasy Formula One, Abacus House, Dudley Street, Luton LU1 1ZZ. Your entry must be received by Wednesday, April 7, 1999 to qualify for the Brazilian GP

GROUP A AND GROUP B DRIVERS

1st 2nd 3rd

GROUP C AND GROUP D CONSTRUCTORS

1st 2nd 3rd

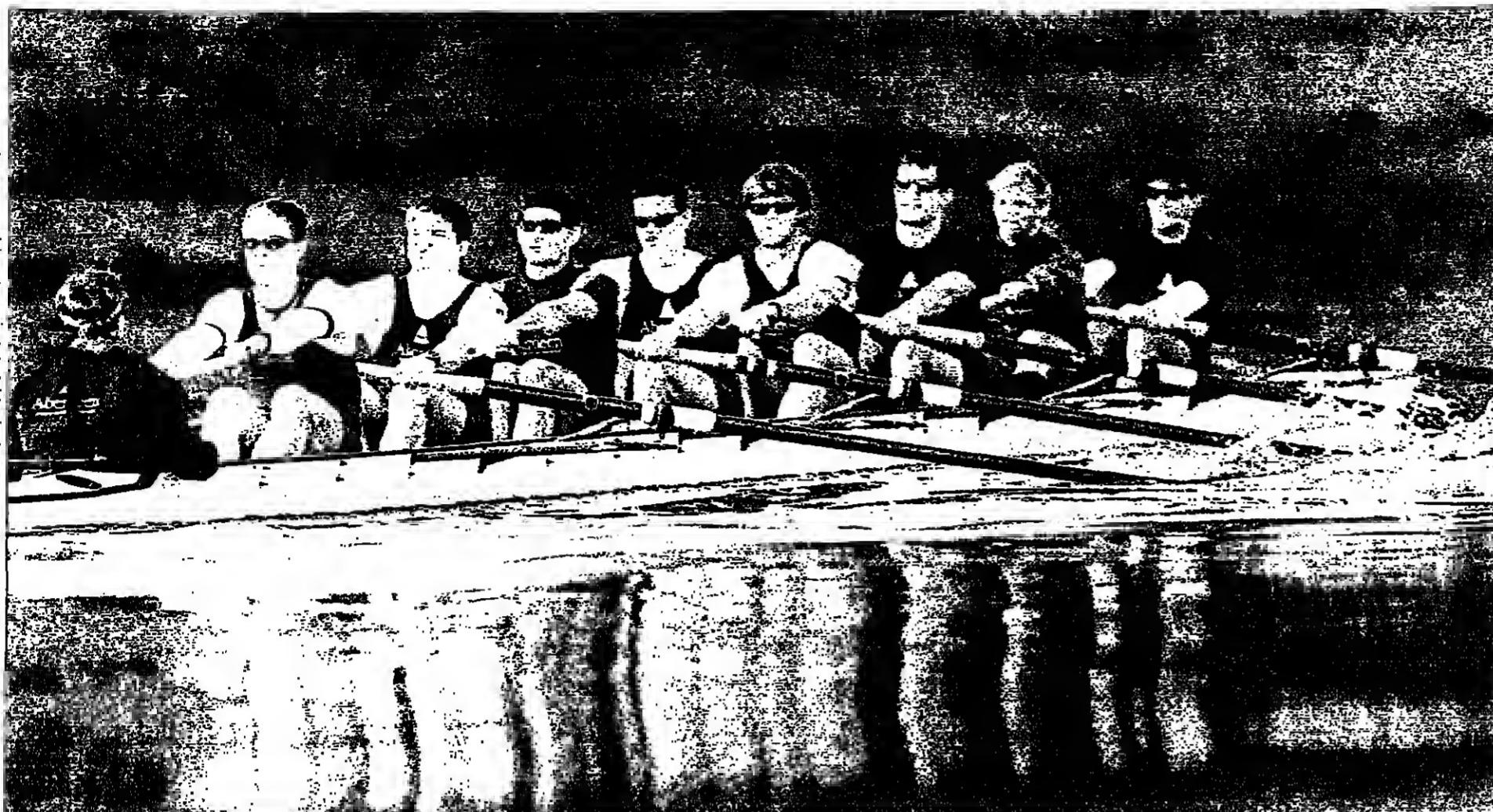
Team Name (maximum of 16 characters)

I have read and accept the rules and wish to enter the Fantasy Formula One game.

Signature _____ Date _____

1. On which day do you

Boat Race: Canadian umpire lays down the law at rehearsals



Oxford looked smooth and controlled in bright sunshine on the Tideway yesterday and were also more impressive at the practice starts from the stake boat. Photograph: Roy Riley

Oxford are starting to impress



Evans: flagged intentions

ROWING

Champions line up for scull challenge

By MIKE ROSEWELL

THE Boat Race tomorrow has a supreme curtain-raiser today when ten world champions, five men and five women, will race the 4½-mile course from Putney to Mortlake in single sculls for the Thames World Sculling Challenge.

Disappointingly, Greg Searle, the title-holder and the only Briton entered in the men's race, has withdrawn due to illness. This still leaves Jamie Koven, the 1997 world champion, from the United States; Derek Porter, the 1993 world champion and Olympic silver medal-winner from Canada; Giovanni Calabrese and Stefano Basalini, the heavyweight and lightweight Italian champions; and Iztok Cop, the 1995 world champion from Slovenia. He has twice won the title, but, as organiser, will act as umpire for the men. Steve Redgrave will be the race starter and Martin Levy, an international umpire, will control the women.

knows the course intimately, but so does her elder sister, Miriam, who qualified as the world double sculls champion. Their three opponents are formidable. Pieta van Dishoeck, from The Netherlands, finished second behind Miriam in the 1993 world doubles championship. Sarah Garner, from the United States, is the world lightweight champion, and Ekatereina Khodotovitch, the Olympic and 1997 world champion from Belarus, will be having her first big race since having a baby.

This is the sixth staging of the race and the most impressive field so far assembled. Peter Haining, the triple world lightweight sculling champion, was the guiding force behind the reintroduction of the challenge over the championship course in 1993. He has twice won the title, but, as organiser, will act as umpire for the men. Steve Redgrave will be the race starter and Martin Levy, an international umpire, will control the women.

BOXING: BRITISH REFEREE WHO GAVE HOLYFIELD A DRAW RETURNS TO RING

Board shows faith in O'Connell

By SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

TO MANY, the scoring of the world heavyweight championship bout between Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield brought into question the integrity of those who run world boxing. Eugenia Williams made Holyfield the winner while Larry O'Connell, the British judge, made it a draw. Williams's scoring gave cause for grave concern, but there can be no impugning the integrity of O'Connell.

Scoring it as you see it is the only way of doing the job honestly. That is what O'Connell did. It is significant that many respected British and American boxing writers at ringside also made the bout a draw. Roy Goodman, the New York senator involved in investigating boxing, told O'Connell that he did not have to come back to the city for the inquiry into the bout. "Your reputation preceded you," Goodman's secretary told him.

The British Boxing Board of Control's faith in O'Connell is reflected in the decision to put him in charge of the British heavyweight championship between Julius Francis, the champion, and Danny Williams at



O'Connell: high reputation

the Albert Hall tomorrow. Francis is with Frank Maloney, Lewis's manager, who swore that O'Connell would never again be allowed to judge contests involving his boxers; Williams is with Frank Warren.

O'Connell was due to referee the British light-middleweight championship on the undercard, but John Morris, the secretary of the Board, after talk-

ing to Maloney, put O'Connell in charge of the heavyweights. Far from being nervous, O'Connell, who has recovered fully from his ordeal by media, is looking forward to tomorrow.

A referee for 23 years and one who has officiated in 49 world championship contests, he said yesterday: "You have to be able to handle criticism. I made an honest decision. If that was a mistake, I have no problem with that. I am looking forward to shaking Maloney's hand."

All the same, O'Connell was a little concerned about how the public would receive him. "I don't know what sort of reception I'll get," he said. "I'll be booted into the ring, or whatever. A lot of people paid a lot of money to go to America. I understand their passion. I can understand them expecting a winner and they thought they had a winner."

"When I put in my score, I thought Lennox had just nicked it. When they called out a draw I said: 'Oh hell, not me!' The last thing we needed

is a fight for the undisputed championship was a draw."

Tomorrow, as it is a British championship, O'Connell will be refereeing and judging as well. The dual job does not worry him. "Referees should always score," he said. "They are right there, next to the fighters. You see the punches more, you feel them more."

The week that followed the Lewis v Holyfield bout was the worst of O'Connell's career. He had no sleep for two days because he was answering telephones. He would have retired if his wife had wanted him to, but, with her support and that of fellow referees, he rode out the storm.

Looking back on that night at Madison Square Garden, O'Connell takes comfort from an incident as he left the stadium. An Irishman came up to him, shook his hand and wished him well. "But you know," the man said, "I didn't agree with you at all."

"No?" said O'Connell. "How did you score it then?"

"I had it four rounds to Holyfield," the man said.

"I had to smile," O'Connell recalled.

THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999

Baseball in fine fettle to enjoy life after Joe

Keith Blackmore senses optimism unbounded for a national pastime

Joe DiMaggio kept his sense of timing to the end. When he died, aged 84, last month, the Yankee Clipper had lasted just long enough to see the sport that made him famous restored to the nation's restored to the nation's

The Major League Baseball season, which begins on Sunday, has a hard act to follow.

The 1998 campaign was perhaps the greatest, finally dispelling the clouds of public suspicion and resentment that had gathered after the infamous players' strike that forced the cancellation of the 1994 World Series.

DiMaggio witnessed something that many baseball fans never expected to see: a successful assault on the single-season home-run record of 61 set by Roger Maris another New York Yankee, in 1961.

Mark McGwire, of the St Louis Cardinals, with 70, and Sammy Sosa, of the Chicago Cubs, with 66, did not so much break the record as

crush it. He also lived long enough to see his beloved Yankees complete a season of unprecedented success, winning 125 games and losing only 50 on their way to winning the World Series, a record that gives them a claim to be the best team of all time.

DiMaggio also saw the end of a sequence that had seemed interminable — Cal Ripken's incredible endurance record of 2,632 consecutive games for the Baltimore Orioles. For more than 16 years, Ripken had missed a game until September 20, when, at last, the ageing warrior chose to sidestep a meaningless fixture against the Yankees.

In all, the 1998 season was enough to bring a gleam to the eye of even the most disenchanted fan and, by season's end, baseball had been restored to its historic place as the nation's pastime.

Certainly there was enough goodwill for the paying public to turn a blind eye to the mighty McGwire's open use of androstenedione, a bodybuilding drug banned by the International Olympic Committee but oddly permitted by Major League Baseball. Had McGwire come from another part of the world, had he not been such an eminently likeable man, had baseball not needed him so badly to be a superstar, he may not have had so easy a ride into the history books.

The spirit of goodwill also obscured an even more threatening problem, one familiar to followers of club football in England and Scotland: baseball is fast dividing into the haves and have-nots.

Last year there were 12 teams with player wage bills

PREDICTIONS

AMERICAN LEAGUE: East: New York Yankees; Central: Cleveland Indians; West: Anaheim Angels; Wildcard: Baltimore Orioles.

NATIONAL LEAGUE: East: Atlanta Braves; Central: Cincinnati Reds; West: Los Angeles Dodgers; Wildcard: New York Mets.

WORLD SERIES: The Yankees lo

berg, their promising closer, seriously injure his shoulder. The Astros will have to do without Moises Alou, their excellent outfielder, who is also injured for the season.

George Steinbrenner, the Yankees' outrageous owner, has tried to improve an already outstanding team by trading David Wells and prospects to the Toronto Blue Jays for Roger Clemens.

On paper, this makes the Yankees unbeatable, for Clemens is arguably the best right-handed pitcher of the modern era. But Wells fitted well in New York, not just because he was a Yankees fan and a colourful personality, but because he was left-handed. Yankee Stadium, where Clemens must pitch half of his games, favours left-handers.

Few will bet against the Yankees, though, nor on this season matching the last for drama and excitement, but baseball at least begins life after Joltin' Joe in good heart.

LINKS

WEBSITE: www.reppata.rowing.org.uk/boatrace/

TODAY'S OUTINGS: Oxford 8am and 2.15pm, Cambridge 9.30am and 2.30pm.

TELEVISION: Channel 5 and Sky Sports will both be showing matches



Clemens, now with the Yankees, warms up for the new season

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Dunlop Tyres

European championship: Substituted Scotland captain could retire

McAllister may find his number up at last

By KEVIN McCARRA

DEFEAT is always slow to fade, but the reverberations will linger above all, in the ears of Gary McAllister. He can surely still hear the boos aimed at him by Scotland supporters during their 2-1 defeat by the Czech Republic in the European championship qualifying match at Celtic Park on Wednesday.

The visitors might have gone 3-0 ahead when McAllister lost possession to Petr Berger. That moment was enough to galvanise the latent hostility of the crowd and every touch by the Scotland captain was jeered thereafter until he was taken off.

McAllister, who refused to comment yesterday, looked dazed upon seeing that it was his number being held up on the substitutes' board. There is now a strong possibility that the poignant scene will constitute the last image of him in his country's colours.

In the wake of cruciate ligament surgery, McAllister, 34, had laboured to reclaim a place in the Scotland side after an absence of 16 months. He returned, however, only to encounter a familiar animosity. Many Scotland fans have long been disgruntled over an individual who has a great gift for knitting play together but who rarely attempts flamboyant deeds.

He is the sort of performer best appreciated when watching a side failing to cope without him. Those who condemned him at Celtic Park will soon have the chance to

see for themselves the effect of his absence. Despite sincere expressions of admiration for McAllister, Craig Brown, the manager, must gauge the potential harm if the derision shown towards his captain begins to sour the atmosphere surrounding Scotland.

"The individual is important and I have always been loyal," Brown said, "but it is a team game and in the interests of the team I have to take harsh decisions. I have done that in the past, but, out of respect, I would not make that decision without consulting the player."

Brown is to discuss the issue with McAllister over the weekend, but his retirement from international football seems likely. "McAllister is not a quitter, but he would not be the first to say enough is enough," Brown said. "I am conscious of the fact that he has a family who will be very hurt by the criticism."

Although the unpopularity of McAllister possesses little rationality, a few contributory factors can be identified. The penalty that he missed in the 2-0 defeat by England at Euro 96 may have increased the intolerance and, as a man who left Motherwell to join Leicester City while still young, he does not have the natural constituency enjoyed by those employed in the Scottish Premier League.

McAllister, with 57 caps, also risks the depreciation that comes to those who have given



McAllister, vilified by supporters, may have made his last appearance for his country in the defeat by the Czech Republic

long service and so become undervalued. He joins a distinguished fraternity of Scotland players who have been maligned virulently.

In 1992, Brian McClair was hectored as he waited to come on as a substitute against Portugal at Ibrox. There are eight points behind the Czech Republic, who lead group

day. "I can't understand that mentality."

The vilification may have to be accepted as an element of the passion that supporters display when caught up with concern over Scotland's fortunes. They have much to worry them now. Scotland are eight points behind the Czech Republic, who lead group

nine, and have to regard a place in the play-offs as their strongest chance of qualifying for the finals.

Despite being spirited on Wednesday, Scotland wobbled in defence and were ineffectual in the opposition goalmouth. Brown admitted that he may speak to Duncan Ferguson, the injured Newcas-

ter United forward, to find out whether he is willing to rescind his retirement from international football. Were the manager's lack of resources not so acute, it would be risible to contemplate a rapprochement with a player who failed to score in any of his seven appearances for his country.

IN BRIEF

FIROZ KASSAM, a London hotelier, took control of Oxford United, the Nationwide League first division club, yesterday. The move could secure a long-term future for Oxford, whose season has been overshadowed thus far by the threat of extinction. Kassam, a Tanzanian-born businessman, has acquired the 89.5 per cent majority shareholding of the Manor Ground club from Robin Herd, the former chairman.

Kassam has repaid £500,000 worth of club debts to Oxford City council and is expected to double that amount as part of the rescue package. In return, work should begin again on the club's new 15,000-capacity stadium at Minchery Farm. Work on the stadium was halted 18 months ago over a pay dispute.

Ramon Vega, the Tottenham Hotspur centre back, looks like missing the rest of the season because of a chipped ankle bone. The Switzerland defender has returned to his homeland after undergoing an operation last week on the ankle he injured in the Worthington Cup final against Leicester City two weeks ago.

Dieter Hamann, the Newcastle United midfield player, is expected to be fit for his side's FA Cup semi-final against Tonbridge A.F.C. next weekend. Hamann was injured in Germany's match with Finland on Wednesday night, but the ankle ligament damage is not as bad as first thought. Gaston Taunay, the Anderlecht and former Holland winger, is to join Newcastle on a ten-day trial.

Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, is looking to establish links with three clubs in Argentina. United already have a "memorandum of co-operation" with Royal Antwerp, the Belgian club, and now three young players from Argentina have trained with United.

Souhampton have been given a £3.5 million grant by the Football Trust for the building of their new stadium. The club received permission for the 32,000-capacity arena on Tuesday.

Nottingham Forest are expected to wait until the end of the season to approach Sammy McIlroy, the MacClesfield manager, about taking over at the City Ground. Ron Atkinson, the Forest manager, is unlikely to be retained if the club is relegated to the Nationwide

McMenemy position safe

By GEORGE CAULKIN

THE pep talk was delivered five miles above sea level, the rhetoric soaring as high as the aeroplane ferrying a weary Northern Ireland squad home to Belfast. Eyes may have been rimmed with red and faces gray with fatigue, but Jim Boyce had people to thank and a message of defiance to deliver.

In spite of the interminable goalless draw in Moldova that virtually closes a slender path to Euro 2000, the president of the Irish FA voiced his gratitude for the effort of players, staff and, crucially, manager: there will be no scapegoat for Northern Ireland's failings and no quick fixes.

He was to embellish his sentiments yesterday, insisting that Lawrie McMenemy's po-

rtfolio of realistic options bevels McMen-

emy's choice of players. His side have scored just six goals in his eight matches to date and although Iain Dowie again performed heroically in the Republican Stadium, at 34, time marches on relentlessly. "We need to unearth a goalscorer," McMenemy said.

For a clutch of players, Dowie included, Wednesday night's debacle will scupper their hopes of reaching the finals of a big competition. Should the Irish subsequently decide that a change of direction is called for, however, the player-coach of Queens Park Rangers hopes to be on hand to reap the benefit.

"That may be a while away,

but it would be great to have that on my C.V. when they put me in my casket," Dowie said.

A similar dearth of realistic options bedevils McMen-

Farnborough see light on horizon

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL BY WALTER GAMMIE

TOP OF TABLE

P W D L F A Pts
Rutland 0 35 18 10 6 61 32 67
Kettering ... 38 19 10 8 52 33 67
Cheltenham ... 34 17 10 7 49 35 59
Hayes ... 35 17 7 11 48 45 58
Kingstonian 33 14 12 7 46 39 54

months' time, but with football clubs these days it's as well to take it at a year at a time."

The Cheltenham and Rushden contingents came through unscathed in the England semi-professional international match in The Netherlands on Tuesday. England drew 1-1 at Genemuiden, with the home side equalising in the second half after Warren Patterson, the Yeovil Town forward, had given John Owens' team a first-half lead.

Owens reported that Gary Butterworth, the Rushden mid-field player, enjoyed an outstanding match and was also delighted with the defence.

Mark Smith, of Stevenage Borough, Michael Danzey, of Woking, and Tim Ryan, of Southport. "The back three and Steve Book [of Cheltenham] in goal did well," he said. "The Netherlands played them up front with an attacking midfield player. It was a good challenge to come up against a system that they don't normally play against."

The England season concludes with a match against a Highland League XI at Chesham on May 21 and an international against Wales at St Albans on May 23.

Gould's enthusiasm wears thin

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

WHEN Bobby Gould, the Wales manager, and his wife, Marjorie, sent out their Christmas cards last year, it raised a chuckle from the recipients. The cards depicted the usual Yuletide scenes, but were embellished by the scorelines "Denmark 1, Wales 2" and "Wales 3, Belarus 2".

Gould could not resist reminding his friends of the most notable results during his three-year tenure of the Principality. They were achieved in the space of five days in Copenhagen and Cardiff last October and took Wales into second place in group one of the European championship qualifying se-

tions. Yesterday, as the squad re-

turned from Zurich after a 2-0

defeat against Switzerland on

Wednesday night, Gould cut a forlorn figure. His dry sense of

humour had deserted him and the optimism generated by the two victories had evaporated.

Switzerland leapfrogged

Wales into second place and,

although not quite back to

square one, Gould must again rethink his strategies before

the next game — a daunting trip to Italy, the group leaders, in June. From looking favourites to fill the runners-up slot and earning a place in the play-offs, Wales must now scrap it out with the Swiss and perhaps Denmark and Bela-

rus.

Yesterday, as the squad re-

turned from Zurich, apart

from the experienced

Stéphane Chapuisat, who

scored both goals, and the elegant Ciriaci Stozzi, had posed

only a limited threat throughout.

Wales should have gained at least a draw, yet failed to seize the moment.

"It was a good opportunity, a great opportunity," he said.

"We're a bit short on personnel and had to ask people to do certain jobs, but it's not always easy for them to adjust. We were poor. We should have given the Swiss a better game, but we're still not out of it. There's still a lot to play for."

Paul Jones, the goalkeeper,

was also pained, but more by

the back injury that he sustained in the pre-match warm-

up and which forced him to retire in the 26th minute. "I hope it's not as bad as it looked and felt," he said. "I was in agony."

David Jones, the Southampton manager, is unlikely to have the services of his namesake for the games against Arsenal and Coventry City over the Easter weekend.

Nathan Blake, the Blackburn Rovers striker, failed to return from Zurich in time to appear at Newport magistrates in Gwent yesterday to answer a charge of threatening and abusive behaviour. He was arrested last week, while on an evening off from the Wales training camp, after being allegedly involved in a late-night incident in Newport. The case was adjourned until May 5.

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Desperate Villa seek backdoor entry to Europe

SWIMMING: RELAY TEAM ENDS BRITAIN'S MEDAL DROUGHT IN RECORD-BREAKING STYLE

Quicksilver quartet turns tide

FROM CRAIG LORD
IN HONG KONG

IT IS necessary to travel back to 1932 to find the last mention of Great Britain among female freestyle relay medal-winners at world level, bronze having been won in the 4 x 100 metres at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles. The drought ended spectacularly at the world short-course championships here last night, when only a world record by Sweden stood between Britain and the 4 x 200 metres title.

The quartet of Karen Pickering, Nicola Jackson, Claire Hudspeth and Karen Legg — with Vicki Horner having helped to produce a European record in the morning heats and so being a worthy winner of a medal as reserve — earned their silver stripes in 7min 53.98sec, a Commonwealth record and 2.25sec behind Sweden, who took gold in 7min 51.70sec.

In two leaps, the Britain squad had taken a massive 5.20sec off the national record in a day. They now stand as the third-fastest of all time, behind Sweden and the discredited team from China, two



Thorpe, right, is congratulated by Klim, his compatriot, after winning the 200 metres freestyle title in world-record time

of whom have since been suspended for drugs' use. China established the previous world mark of 7min 51.92sec when winning the world short-course title two years ago in Sweden.

The day had started well for the Britain team. Jackson, a 15-year-old newcomer to the senior line-up, who holds great promise of future success at world level, was timed almost two seconds inside her British junior record at 1min 57.24sec in the morning heats. That remained the fastest split time of the day. It was a pity that the lanky schoolgirl's progress came too late for her inclusion in the individual event here.

Her effort helped the British quartet to a European record of 7min 55.1sec in the morning, and another sub-1min 58sec swim in the final, alongside a similar time from Pickering, saw them take another 2.53sec off the British record of 7min 58.1sec, also set in Sweden, when the team finished well outside the medals.

Pickering said: "It's a great

start. We now know we can chase that world record. We came here hoping and believing we could win a medal and before today that would have been a good thing to achieve. But when you see how close you came to being best in the world, you feel disappointed with a silver. It's strange feeling."

Sweden's world record was the second of the day, the first having fallen to Ian Thorpe, the 16-year-old from Sydney with the size 16 feet. He recorded 1min 43.28sec in the 200 metres freestyle, his sublime effort snatching the title from Michael Klim, his team-mate and the world long-course champion over the same distance, by 0.50sec.

Thorpe's achievement also confined the name of Giorgio Lamberti to history. Until two weeks ago, the Italian had held the longest surviving records in men's swimming, the 200 metres at both long and short-course. Then Grant Hackett, Thorpe's 16-year-old compatriot, broke the long-course record in Brisbane.

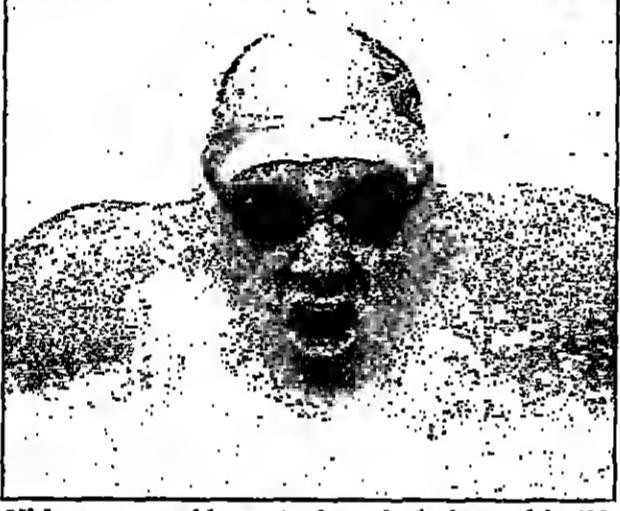
Hackett will attempt to steal

the short-course standard from Thorpe by leading the Australia 4 x 200 metres team today, having failed to qualify for the individual event.

The fountain that rises from Thorpe's thunderous kick is a sight not seen in the wake of any other swimmer. Teammates admit to using tactics in

heat that will qualify them for finals in any lane except the one next to him. Hackett describes racing next to Thorpe as like swimming in a waterfall, while Daniel Kowalski, the Australia No 2 over 1,500 metres, likened the experience to surfing in the wash when you miss a wave.

Bobby Yip



Hickman powers his way to victory in the heats of the 100 metres butterfly. The Briton is favourite for gold today

Seemingly unaware and certainly not carried away by the legend that is developing around him, Thorpe said merely: "I'm very honoured and very proud to break the world record. It's great for Australia to have both long and short-course records and take an italic right out of the books."

Klim had an excuse for his narrow defeat, even if he never uttered it. Fourteen minutes before the 200 metres, he had qualified for the final of the 100 metres butterfly, to be held today, just 0.02sec behind James Hickman of Britain.

Hickman lowered the championship record in both the heat and semi-final, from 51.95sec to 51.78sec and then 51.51sec last night to establish himself as the title favourite, a fraction ahead of Klim and Lars Frolander, of Sweden. "I'm just warming up," Hickman said.

Bobby Yip



Hickman powers his way to victory in the heats of the 100 metres butterfly. The Briton is favourite for gold today

FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated *denotes all-black

FA Carling Premiership

Aston Villa v West Ham (7.45).....

National League

Crewe v Birmingham (5.0).....

Second division

Colchester v Preston (7.45).....

Northampton v Bournemouth (7.45).....

Cheltenham v Luton (3.30).....

MONTAGUE TOURNAMENTS Under-15

International: England v Chile (2.0)

Dr. Martens Cup: Northern

division: Fleet Town v Havant and

Watervale, Folkestone Invicta v Ashford

RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Canvey

Island v Whitchurch (2.0).....

THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: Third division: Halifax v Grimsby (at Gainsby) (2.0)

LEAGUE OF WALES: Connah's Quay v

Gwynedd (2.0).....

JB PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE:

Under-19: Leicester v Everton (1.0)

Under-17: Nottingham Forest v Leicester (1.30).....

ARMOTT INSURANCE NORTH

LEAGUE: First division: Jarrow Roofing v

South Shields; West Auckland v Shildon

Walsall v Hartlepool (7.30).....

Gateshead v Hartlepool (7.30).....

London v Hull (3.30).....

Salford v Warrington (3.0).....

Sheffield v Huddersfield (3.0).....

St Helens v St Helens (3.0).....

Wigan v St Helens (3.0).....

Wigan v Whitehaven (3.0).....

Far too much soap in the changing rooms

The interwoven plotlines of *Playing the Field* (BBC1) lured us to their various denouements last night. The women's football team drama finished in a cascade of multiple climaxes, peaked by *Castlefield Blues*' triumph on the pitch, bringing promotion to the National League and a third series.

The show's strength lay in the fine writing and ensemble acting, both underplayed, witty, humane and sharply observed. This final episode, however, was taken up with sorting out the plot, as the tangled webs of deceit unravelled before our very eyes.

The match itself became the cathartic moment of resolution and redemption, but it was completely upstaged by the changing-room crises which preceded it. First the fiddling young entrepreneur, Dennis, was beaten up by the Mullen brothers in front of the team, including his horrified girl-

friend, Jo. Then Theresa ended up telling Jo that her real dad was Geraldine's father with whom she, Theresa, had had an affair at the age of 14. This was news to Geraldine, who was listening in the doorway.

Geraldine's life fell apart on the spot. The rest of the team were gobsmacked too. Ryan decided his gob had been smacked enough and legged it, leaving coach John psyching the girls up with his pre-match pep talk. I bet Arsene Wenger and Alex Ferguson don't have to cope with this nonsense.

But then, of course, the show isn't really about football, any more than *Soldier, Soldier* was about the army, *On the Buses* was about London Transport or *Harbour Lights* is about anywhere in the known universe. All these ensemble yarns, even well written ones like this, invariably end up as domestic melodramas. They may start as something powerful,

exciting or intriguing, but, like the oven or horses of yore, they all end up as soap.

The same is certainly true of *NYPD Blue* (Channel 4). Stephen Bochco did not invent this genre. When he was planning his first big multi-pilot ensemble series, *Hill Street Blues*, he made the cast watch old episodes of the BBC's *Z Cars*, which created the template. But Bochco's productions defined the style and it was *NYPD Blue* which developed the hand-held, fly-on-the-wall camerawork, interspersed with montages of raw New York life.

There is probably a neologism for these shows, "top-up-soap" perhaps or "soap-operas". It is a tribute to Bochco's success that the style has been so widely imitated in America and Britain that *NYPD Blue* now seems perfectly normal, verging on the quaint.

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

with the rough diamond dick getting down and dirty on the mean streets. The real interest, however, was over on the set of the hospital drama, where Spowicz's partner, detective Bobby Simone, was learning that his heart had suffered permanent damage and he would need a transplant.

Spowicz, of course, is played by Jimmy Smits. His glamorous good-looks make him an incongruous figure in the grubby world of the police precinct and the contrast with the short, stocky, pugnacious Spowicz (Dennis Franz) could not be more marked.

But this is a "buddy" story, so the real interest lies in the emotional stress suffered by Spowicz as his partner lay at death's door. It made him even more aggressive than usual.

Still, Simone's prognosis doesn't seem too bad. Spowicz's colleagues stopped him doing anything really dumb; they managed to

crack the murder case, and at least they didn't even have to play a crucial football match afterwards.

I'm thinking about having a "professional" character alarm installed on top of our television. This is a red light and siren device which will flash and sound every time a really irritating new personality appears, giving viewers the chance to change channels or leave the room before they get under your skin.

It would have gone off during *DIY4 BBC2*, as soon as "master carpenter" Rics Martin put in an appearance. The idea of this programme is that Rics and his colleague, the plumber Tony Elvin, will show us all how to perform simple DIY tasks by teaching members of the public in their own homes.

It's like *Ground Force* or *Home Front* without the outlandish designs. Instead they are just

putting up a few shelves or changing the taps. Last night a research analyst called Nicky had a very handsome mixer tap with shower attachment fitted, while social worker Chris Mamby got a useful MDF desk and shelving combo installed in the alcove in her son's bedroom.

Although I have undertaken a wide range of DIY projects in my time, I have never attempted to change a tap unit, so I watched with something vaguely approaching interest. Tony's presentation was clear, systematic and logical and the next time this problem arises I will feel fully confident to call a plumber.

Rics, on the other hand is an insufferably chirpy cockney geezer, straight out of an Ealing comedy and horribly pleased with himself. Perhaps he will show us how to install a professional character alarm so we can switch channels before he appears.

BBC1

7.00am News; Weather (T) (5779918)
7.10 Children's BBC: Spot and His Grandparents Go to the Carnival (640622) 7.40 Sparky's Magic Piano (7076192) 8.30 The Silver Brumby (2944) 9.00 Inch High Private Eye (7353550) 9.25 The Midas Touch (7363937) 9.55 Teletubbies (7397937) 10.20 The World of Peter Rabbit and Friends (737260)

10.50 News; Weather (T) (8043821)

11.00 The Shadow of the Cross (51192)

12.00 The People's Passion (195802)

12.50pm News; Weather (T) (74702208)

1.05 Battersea Dogs Home Two-lurchers are admitted (64191376)

1.25 Neighbours Susan takes on the local radio station (T) (84195182)

1.30 Back to the Future (1985) Michael J. Fox stars in the blockbuster sci-fi adventure about a teenager who is transported back to the 1950s. Directed by Robert Zemeckis (T) (3250260)

3.40 & K Mystery Tous (T) (7156444)

4.20 **CHOCIE** Bramby Hedge Animated adventure for all the family (T) (7667208)

4.45 Swap 'Til You Drop (T) (481314)

5.15 News; Weather (T) (2692314)

5.40 Neighbours Susan takes on the local radio station (T) (481685)

5.45 Beethoven (1992) A slobbering St Bernard invades the home of an all-American family and ingrates himself with the household. With Charles Grodin, Bonnie Hunt, Oliver Platt and David Duchovny. Directed by Brian Levant (T) (3565173)

7.30 Top of the Pops The week's chart-toppers, featuring the UK's number one single (T) (89)

8.00 Ground Force An update from Whitley Bay, where the green-fingered team revisit a family's once-neglected front garden which they transformed into a horticultural paradise (T) (8550)

8.30 Changing Rooms Redecorated. The designers return to the sites of some of their earlier creations (T) (319598)

9.10 News; Weather (T) (200289)

BBC2

7.00am News; Weather (T) (5779918)

7.45 The Old Dark House (1932) Classic comedy horror starring Peter Lorre, Directed by James Whale (8450482)

8.55 Men's Favourite Sport? (1964) Rock Hudson stars as a hapless salesman who is enlisted into an angling competition. Directed by Howard Hawks (8289866)

10.50 Kidnapped (1971) Michael Caine stars as Albert Breck, who escapes the Redcoats at the massacre of Culloden and ends up having to decide between Scotland's cause or saving an innocent man's life. With Trevor Howard. Directed by Delbert Mann (20330314)

12.30pm Birds with Tony Soper (3747550)

ITV

5.30am ITV Morning News (36444)

6.00 GMTV (2204206)

9.25 Hey Arnold! (T) (7367753)

9.55 Angry Beavers (T) (8011578)

10.20 Oggie and the Cockroaches (1941376)

10.40 The Easter Storykeepers (T) (1000550)

12.00 Crossing Rose (T) (53855)

12.30pm ITV Lunchtime News (T) (74700840)

12.43 HTV Weather (7828835)

12.45 WEST: Getaway (T) (831260)

12.45 WALES: Wish You Were Here? (Amsterdam, Egypt, Jamaica and the Swiss Alps) (T) (831260)

1.15 Daffy Duck's Egg-Clement (T) (831613)

1.45 The Greatest Story Ever Told (1965) Epic drama charting the life of Jesus, starring Max von Sydow, John Wayne, Charlton Heston and Angela Lansbury. Directed by George Stevens (T) (36598111)

5.15 Living a Bug's Life Behind the scenes of the new computer-animated film, which features the voices of David Hyde Pierce (2687482)

5.40 HTV News and Weather (T) (212005)

5.45 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (373227)

6.00 Mr Bean Double Bill Rowan Atkinson's comic alter-ego wreaks havoc. In Back to School Mr Bean, just parking the car proves too much for the hapless hero, while in Mr Bean in Room 426, he somehow manages to get locked out of his hotel room (68281)

7.00 Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right Popular game show (T) (4588)

7.30 Coronation Street Leanne faces an agonising choice (T) (85)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.45-1.15pm Dinosaurs (831280)

5.15 Campus Cops (2687482)

5.40-6.45 Central News; Weather (212005)

11.20-11.30 Central News; Weather (4827351)

11.30 Midnight Caller (878647)

12.35pm FILM: Age of Treason (321951)

2.20 Club@vision (732832)

3.05 Box Office America (54807999)

3.35 The Haunted Fleischk (44229970)

4.00 Central Jobfinder '99 (7452116)

5.20-6.30 Asian Eye (9965574)

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (5306047)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (99624395)

9.05 Billy Rose's Jumbo (1962) Circus musical, starring Don Deyo. Directed by Charles Water (T) (82021268)

11.25 Boy Meets World (T) (2100659)

11.30 Tidors: Seaside Series (56596)

12.30pm Bewitched (T) (58444)

1.00 Pet Rescue (T) (59518)

1.30 The Ocean World of John Staneman

How the world's oceans reveal evidence of environmental change affecting the future of the planet (T) (80043)

2.00 The Vicious Circle (1957) Thriller about a Harley Street surgeon who sells out to clear himself of a trumped-up murder charge. John Mills, Cedric Hardwicke and Noelle Middleton star. Directed by Gerald Thomas (T) (74163)

3.30 Collectors' Lot Comedy memorabilia (T) (79)

4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (14)

4.30 Countdown (T) (7827314)

4.55 Rickle Rickle (T) (8672647)

5.30 Pet Rescue Animal welfare tales (T) (50)

6.00 TFI Friday Music and chat, with Chris Evans (66463)

7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (795208)

7.15 The Long Good Friday The story behind last year's peace agreement in Northern Ireland (T) (527032)

8.00 Trading Up Car-swapping game show (3/8) (T) (1260)

8.30 Brookside Susannah remembers her tragic past (T) (3145)

9.00 Friends The gang celebrate new year with a party at Monica and Rachel's flat — will they keep their promise not to bring dates? (T) (8531)

9.30 Snack The Piggy Offbeat sketch show, starring Fiona Allen, Doon Mackichan and Sally Phillips (T) (7) (78208)

5.00-5.30pm Freescreen (87319)

5.30pm

As HTV West except:

12.45-1.15pm Shortland Street (831260)

5.14 Anglia Air Watch (6822519)

5.15-5.45 Anglia News and Weather (473395)

11.19 Anglia Air Watch (628024)

11.20-11.35 Anglia News and Weather (734024)

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RUGBY UNION 50

Will King rule
in the game
of two halves?

SPORT

FRIDAY APRIL 2 1999

Davis Cup draw favours hosts Britain look to Henman for inspiration

By ALIX RAMSAY, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT

THE easy part is over. The draw for Great Britain's first tie in the world group of the Davis Cup since 1992 were without a hitch yesterday. Now it is down to Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski to do the rest. Today they begin their grand adventure against the United States with Henman starting proceedings against Jim Courier, followed by Rusedski against Todd Marin.

In theory, the draw has fallen well for Britain, with the chance to get the first point on the board there for the taking — Henman is ranked No 7 in the world, while Courier lingers at No 50 — but the Davis Cup is different from any other tennis tournament and the weight of expectation will sit heavy on Henman's shoulders.

This is the realisation of David Lloyd's ambition. In 1995, Britain were struggling to stay in the Euro-African zone group two, the equivalent of the Nationwide League third division in football, and playing Monaco in a relegation tie. Britain won 50, but it was not much to celebrate. Then Lloyd, as Davis Cup captain, announced that within three years his team would be in the world group, the Premiership of tennis. While the potential of Henman and Rusedski was obvious, it was the sort of prediction that even Kevin Keegan would hesitate to make.

"When we played Monaco, we were starting out at rock bottom and we appreciated that," Henman said. "We knew we were on a mission to get back into the world group. But I think that, with Greg's and my ability, we don't just want to settle for the first round. I think that with a little bit of luck, we firmly believe we can go all the way."

Yesterday the players and

TODAY: Singles (1pm): Tim Henman v Jim Courier, Greg Rusedski v Todd Marin.
TOMORROW: Doubles (4pm): Henman and Rusedski v Courier and Alby O'Brien.
SUNDAY: Singles (2pm): Henman v Marin, Rusedski v Courier.
TELEVISION: Live on BBC2 from 12.50pm.
WEBSITES: www.tta.org.uk/; www.daviscup.com

captain were gung-ho, but no one was underplaying the tension of the situation. They are professionals, they are experienced, but they are as prone to nerves as the next man.

"You are excited and you are nervous before you play a match, but, if anything, the easy bit is playing," Henman said. "You are out there, you're running around and, hopefully, you're in control of the situation. When you're on the sidelines watching, you're 100 per cent behind your team, but there is nothing you can actually do."

Henman and Rusedski will have all the help they could wish for. The 9,400 seats at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham are sold out and the faithful have been provided with rattles, banners, flags

and any number of patriotic tokens with which to wave, make noise and generally get behind their team. Not that it seems to have made any impression on the Americans.

Martin and Courier sat impassively as the Davis Cup banner fell off the wall behind them and landed in their laps. "I'm assuming this is a bigger deal, perhaps, than Britain's other ties leading into this," Courier said, without a flicker of a smile. "but we just go about our business of preparing and probably we are sheltered from what you are witnessing and experiencing. We have a job to do. We come here, we prepare and try to do our job and that's it."

Neither Courier nor Martin are big on emotion, but they have come to Birmingham with a point to prove. In the lead-up to the tie, much of the attention has been focused on Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi and their refusal to participate, while Martin and Courier have been branded as second-string players.

That, though, is dangerous. Both are climbing back up the rankings after a series of injuries and while Martin, ranked No 8, has risen faster, Courier's Davis Cup efforts cannot be ignored. Last year, against Russia, he took Yevgeny Kafelnikov to five sets before losing, but came back from two sets down to beat Marat Safin and settle the tie. He did it again against Belgium, winning the opening rubber and then the tie in a five-set doubles match with Martin.

Serving power — and the ability to deal with it — will be the key. The indoor Greenset surface is fast enough to let Henman and Rusedski show off their serving prowess, but not so fast that they will struggle to make returns. Martin believes that it will get faster once the arena is full and warm.

In all the excitement, no one was mentioning the fact that Henman and Rusedski have an 11-2 losing record against Martin and Courier and Lloyd, the eternal optimist, was unusually cautious. "You can't predict Davis Cup," he said. "You can only predict it at about ten minutes past one when they have hit the first ball, then you know what is going to happen." And then it really will be up to Henman and Rusedski to do the rest.

Rob Hughes, page 51

and the arena is full and warm. Along with Vince Wells, he was playing for a Lahore Gymkhana side, to allow all of the party match practice ahead of the Coca-Cola Cup in Sharjah next week, itself a "net" before the tournament in England. Angus Fraser bowled for England despite not being in the batting XI.

Quite apart from his evident good form, it might be as well for the morale of the bowlers that the strapping Flintoff is promoted to the first-choice team. He hit seven sixes and 11 fours during an innings lasting 127 minutes and forced Fraser out of the

picturesque ground twice in a single over.

Once Adam Hollioake had bowled Flintoff with a yorker, England progressed to victory by 13 runs. Their own total of 375 for five from 50 overs featured half-centuries by Alec Stewart, Graeme Hick, Neil Fairbrother and Adam Hollioake. All four retired to allow the lower order opportunities with the bat.

Flintoff, 24, is the youngest player in the England squad and the only member of the party yet to appear in a one-day international. Although he made his Test debut against South Africa last sea-

son, he struggled to impose himself during the victories at Trent Bridge and Headington. Elevator to the highest level may have arrived too soon.

However, his powerful strokplay came to the fore on the A tour to Zimbabwe and South Africa, where the management were also impressed that Flintoff had responded to instructions from David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, by slimming from 19st to less than 17st and improving his all-round fitness. Along with the third seam-

er's role, the pivotal positions at No 6 and No 7 are the most open in the side and Flintoff is putting pressure on Hollioake, who is a canny operator but was disappointing in the recent one-day tournament in Australia. He has also opened

the batting for Lancashire in limited-overs cricket and bowls at a useful medium pace.

England have nine or ten games — depending on whether they reach the Coca-Cola Cup final — before the World Cup proper begins against Sri Lanka on May 14. Flintoff can expect to be given an opportunity in at least one of the two day-night matches against Pakistan. These fixtures will present a far more searching examination than yesterday of England's capabilities.

Flintoff flourishes at Fraser's expense

By RICHARD HORSON

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"We just have to try to get there any way we can. At least we would be there and we have to try to be positive and say that no one remembers who does well in the qualifying heats for the 100 metres at an Olympic Games. I am not saying those guys don't try, but it is all about the final, the big event."

"Football is the same. Look at Denmark. They came off a beach to play in the European championship in 1992, when Yugoslavia were suspended, and went away as winners."

"Our job is to make sure we stay ahead of Bulgaria and Poland and give ourselves that same chance. There was always a possibility this could happen."

"Sweden have come out of the blocks so quickly it already looks as if the rest of us are playing for second place," Keegan said. "It just shows that at this level you cannot af-

ford slip-ups, because as soon as we lost to Sweden and drew at home to Bulgaria, a situation was developing which was out of our hands. Now it is completely out of our hands."

"But from the moment I came into the job, I knew there was a chance this could happen. You hope you will be lucky, but really this was very predictable."

"We have time to talk everything through and when we are on the plane home from Sofia in June after the match against Bulgaria, we will have a clearer idea of what is going to happen."

"Such is his loyalty to Fulham and his concern not to abuse the opportunity they have given him that many thought, in the aftermath of the Swedish victory, that the prospect of a four-match commitment might prove to be too daunting."

However, Keegan, who led England to a 3-1 victory over

GROUP FIVE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	4	4	0	0	8	12	12
England	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Poland	4	2	0	2	7	4	6
Bulgaria	4	1	2	2	4	5	5
Luxembourg	0	0	0	0	10	0	0

RESULTS: Sept 25: Poland 2 Sweden 2 England 2; Sept 26: Bulgaria 0 Poland 0; Oct 1: Poland 2 Bulgaria 0; Oct 2: Bulgaria 0 Sweden 0; Bulgaria 0 Oct 14: Bulgaria 2 Poland 0; Luxembourg 0 England 3; Nov 22: England 2 Bulgaria 0; Dec 6: Poland 2 Luxembourg 0 Bulgaria 2; Poland 0 Sweden 1

FIXTURES: June 25: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Sweden; June 26: England v Luxembourg; July 2: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 3: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 4: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 5: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 6: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 7: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 8: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 9: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 10: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 11: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 12: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 13: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 14: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 15: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 16: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 17: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 18: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 19: Poland v Bulgaria; England v Luxembourg; July 20: Poland v Bulgaria; 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